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# SAVEUR

*Savor a World of Authentic Cuisine*

## FALL FEAST

Sausages, savory pies,  
and other cool-weather  
comfort foods

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## Classic Roast Beef

How to make the juiciest  
tenderloin ever

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## DO IT YOURSELF

Pickles, vinegar, yogurt,  
grape soda, and more

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## DELICIOUS MALAYSIA

Asia's melting pot

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Rosemary-Rubbed  
Beef Tenderloin  
*See page 50 for the recipe*

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OCTOBER 2011





*chanterelle*



*bluefoot*



*white beech*

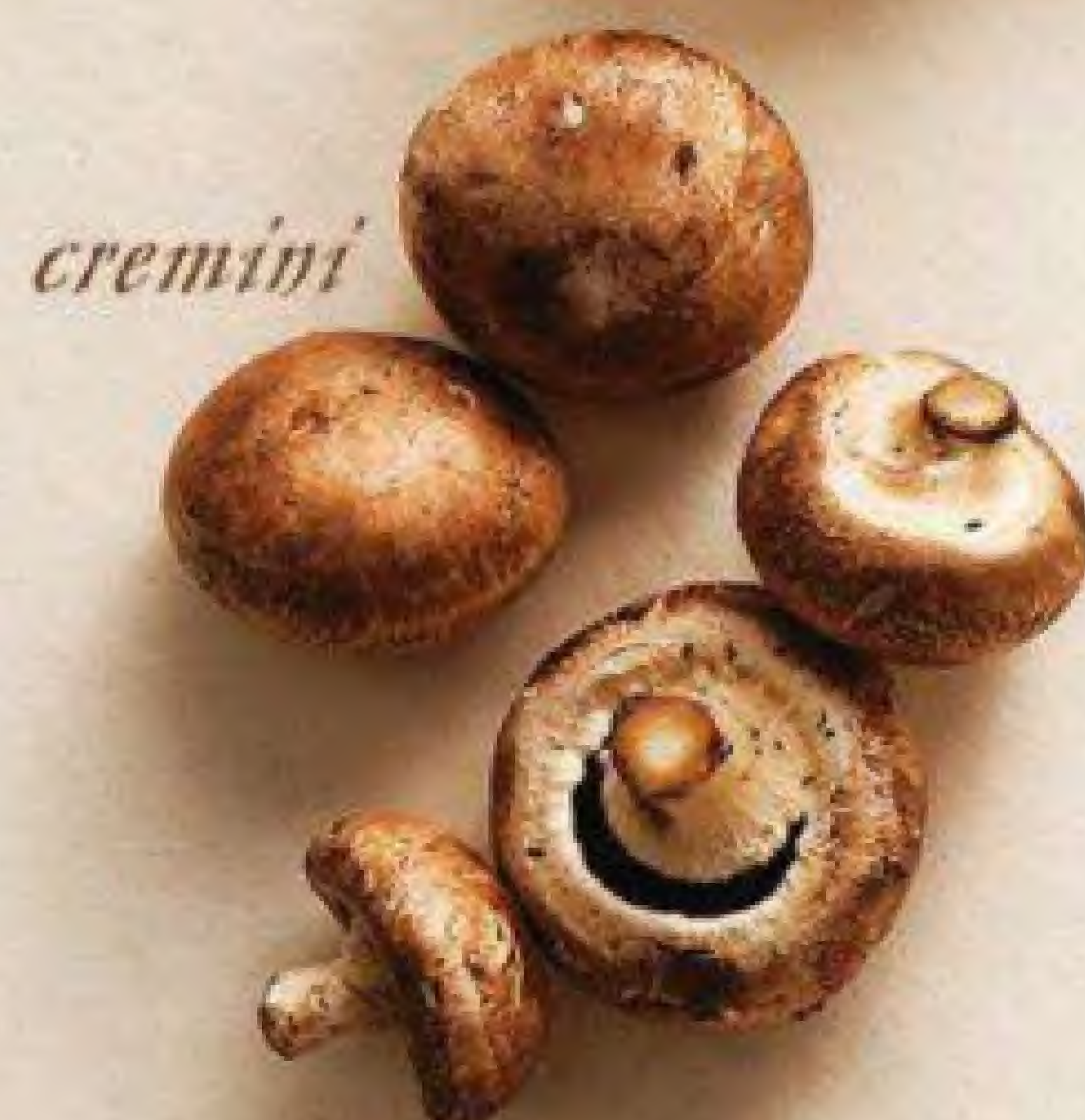


*shiitake*



*bear's head*

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*enoki*



*brown beech*



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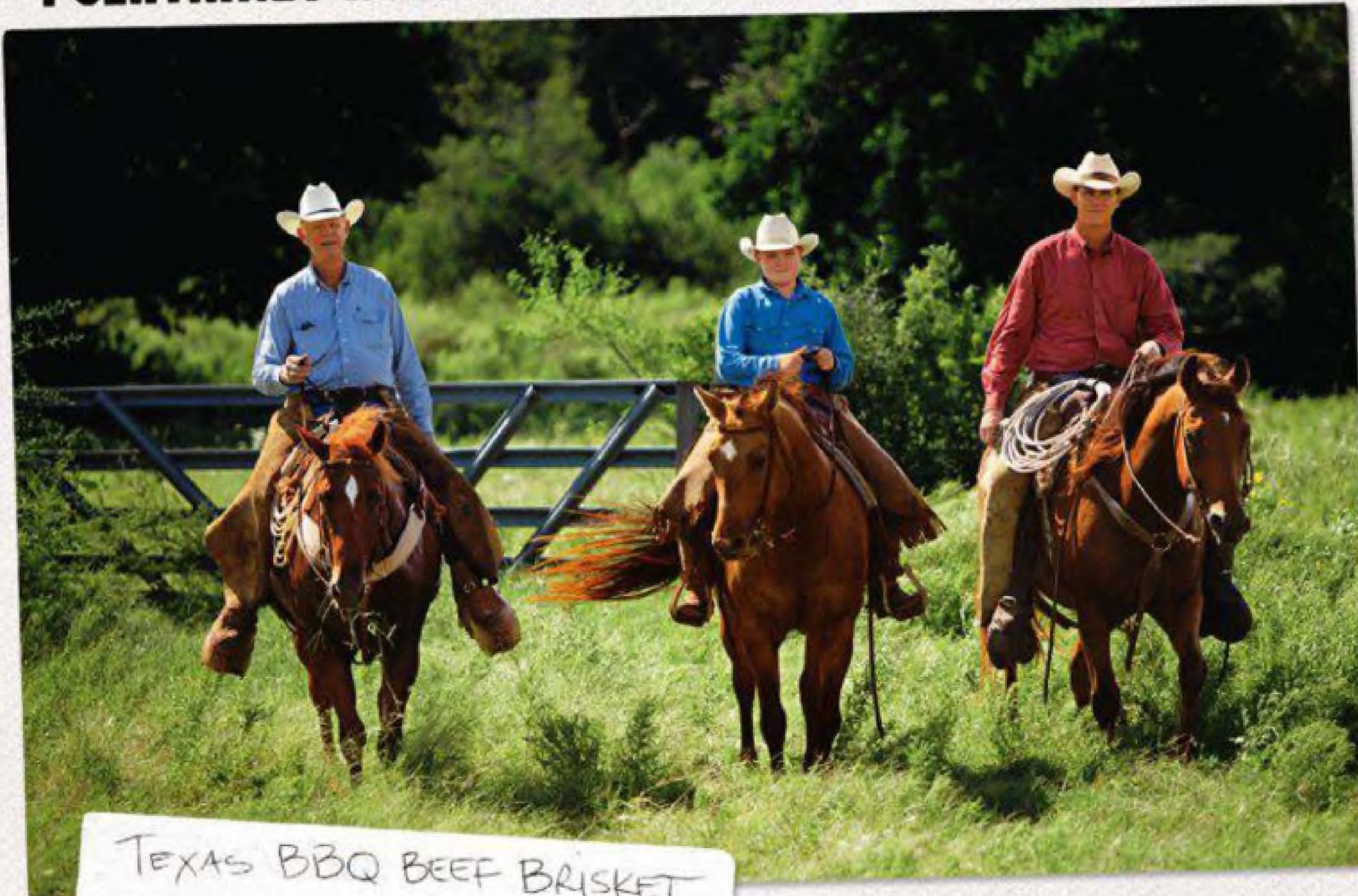
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# FROM OUR TABLE TO YOURS

**"I CERTAINLY WOULD NOT TRADE THIS FOR ANYTHING."** I'm fourth generation here, born and raised on our family ranch.



By about the early 1920s, my great-grandfather had a lot of this country put together by then. We're able to live and work on this beautiful land, and the best thing about it is that I too get to raise my family out here. It's a great privilege to be able to do what we do. Of course, someday, I'd very much like for my son to be able to pick up where I leave off."

*Austin Brown*  
Brown Ranch  
Texas

TEXAS BBQ BEEF BRISKET

## A BROWN FAMILY FAVORITE TEXAS BBQ BEEF BRISKET



**Total Recipe Time: 3 to 3½ hours**

1 boneless beef brisket, flat cut  
(about 2½ to 3½ pounds)  
¾ cup barbecue sauce  
½ cup dry red wine

**Rub:**

2 tablespoons chili powder  
1 tablespoon packed brown sugar  
1½ teaspoons garlic powder

**Makes 6 to 8 servings**

Nutrition information per serving: 1/6 of recipe: 258 calories; 7 g fat (3 g saturated fat, 3 g monounsaturated fat); 62 mg cholesterol; 340 mg sodium; 8 g carbohydrate; 1.3 g fiber; 36 g protein; 5.6 mg niacin; 0.5 mg vitamin B<sub>6</sub>; 2.6 mcg vitamin B<sub>12</sub>; 3.7 mg iron; 37 mcg selenium; 8.7 mg zinc.

This recipe is an excellent source of protein, niacin, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, vitamin B<sub>12</sub>, iron, selenium and zinc.

1. Combine rub ingredients in small bowl; press evenly onto beef brisket. Place brisket, fat side up, in stockpot.

2. Combine barbecue sauce and wine in small bowl. Pour around brisket; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover tightly and simmer 2½ to 3 hours or until brisket is fork-tender. Remove brisket; keep warm.

3. Skim fat from cooking liquid. Bring cooking liquid to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and cook, uncovered, 8 to 10 minutes or until reduced to 1 cup sauce, stirring occasionally.

4. Trim fat from brisket. Carve diagonally across the grain into thin slices. Serve with sauce.

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<sup>2</sup> SmartMoney magazine, June 2010 and June 2011. Industry review ranking 17 leading discount brokers in 2010, 10 in 2011. Results based on ratings in the following categories: commissions and fees, interest rates on cash, mutual funds and investment products, banking services, trading tools, research, and customer service. Criteria not equally weighted.

<sup>3</sup> Kiplinger's magazine, December 2010. Industry review ranking 14 leading discount brokers. Results based on ratings in the following categories: costs, Web site usability, investment choices, customer service, research, and tools. Criteria not equally weighted. Fidelity was also #1 in last survey conducted (November 2008), which was out of 12 discount brokers using similar criteria. For 2010, TD Ameritrade tied with Fidelity for the #1 spot.

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# SAVEUR



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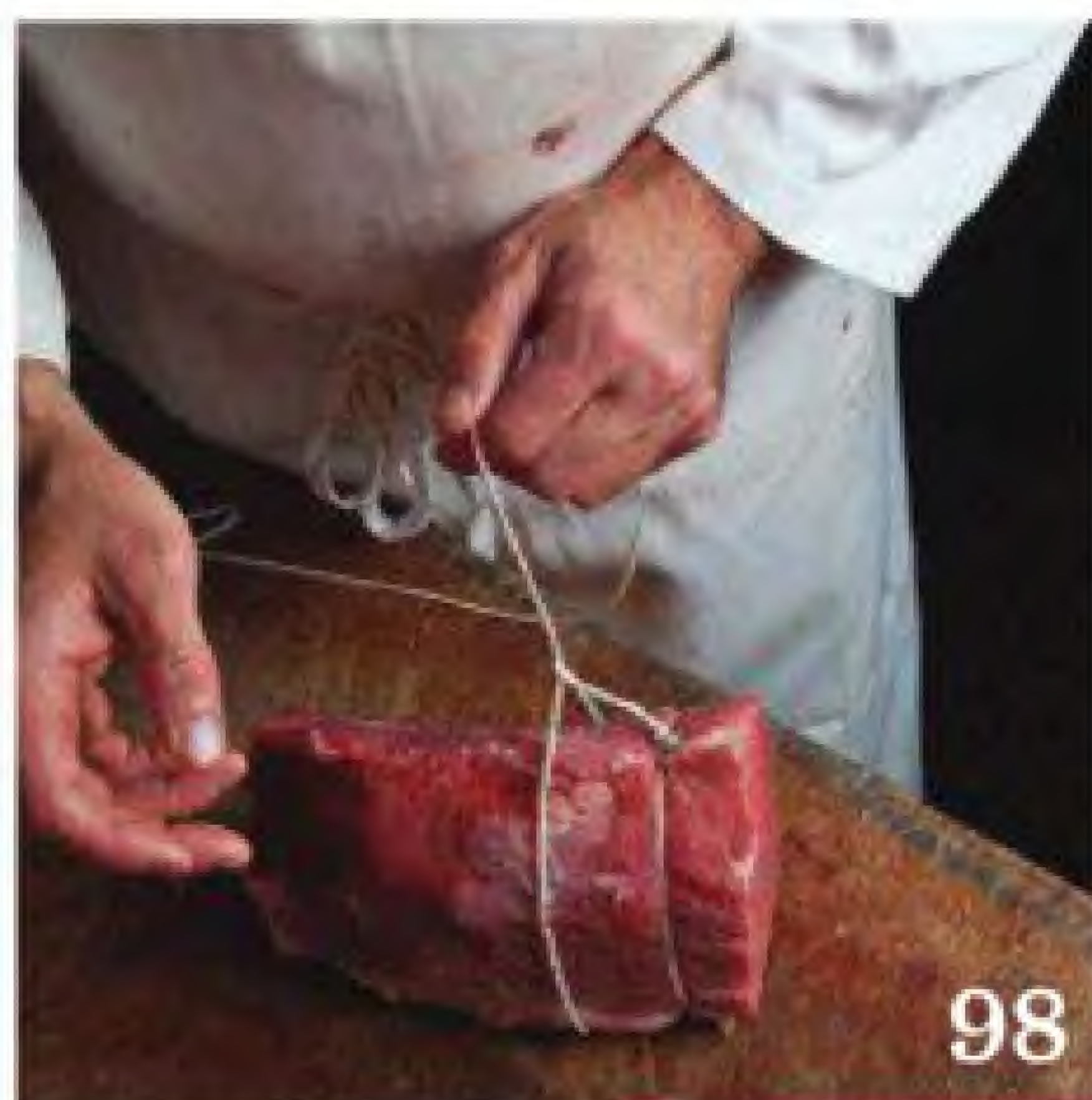
Cover Rosemary-Rubbed Beef Tenderloin PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD COLEMAN

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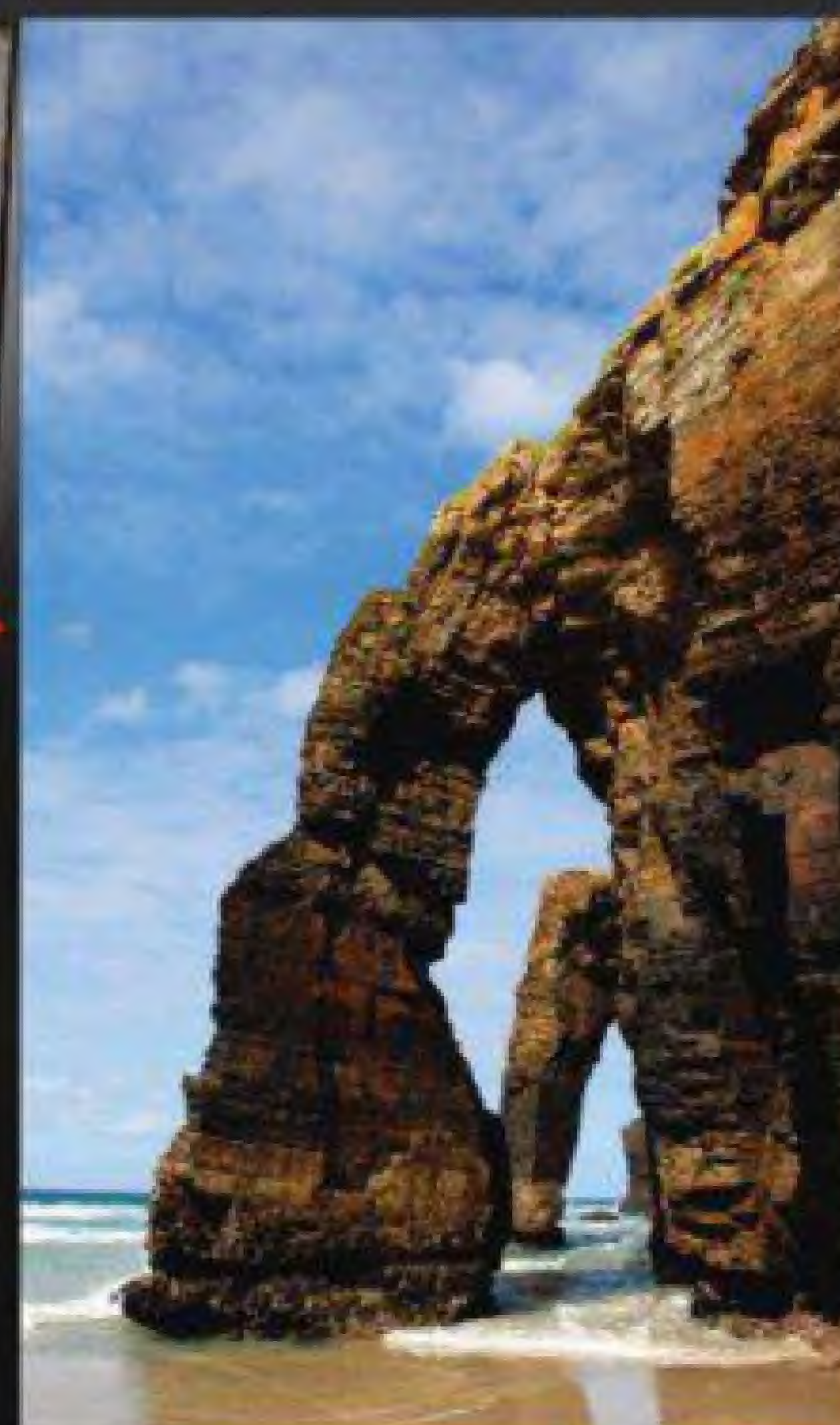
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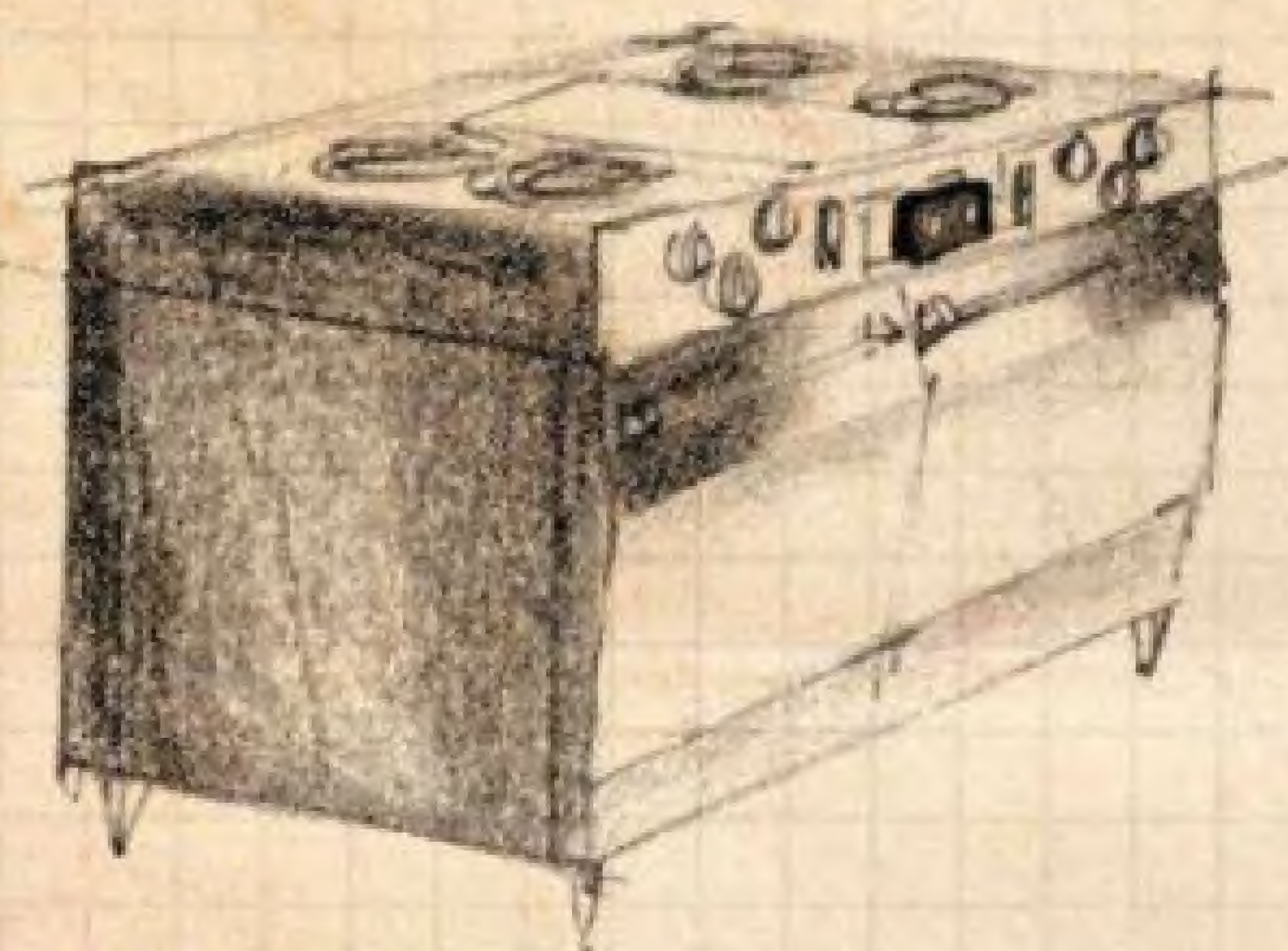
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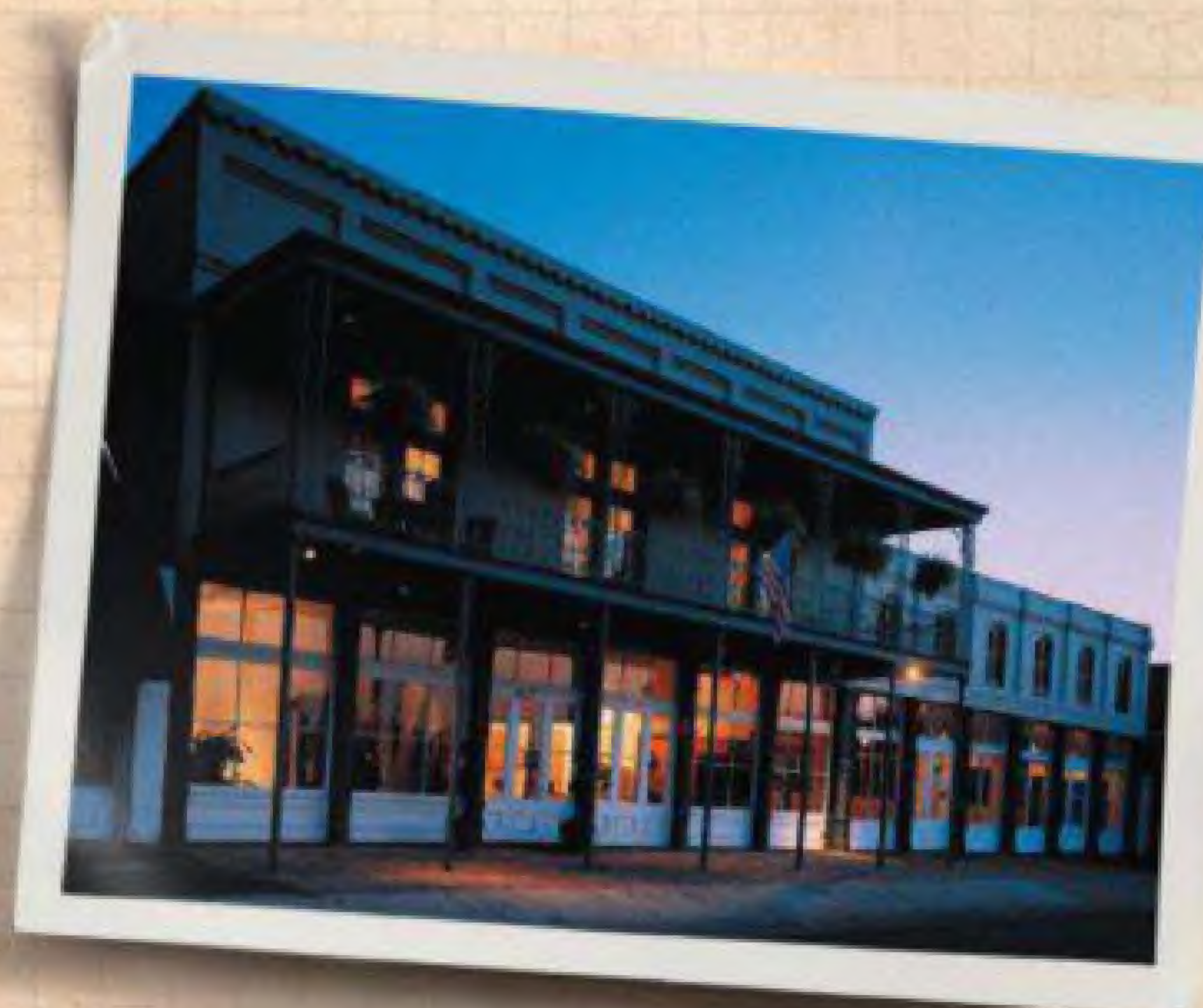
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Pictured left: Jerome Shaw, Quality Inspector



Sur la table  
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PRESENTS

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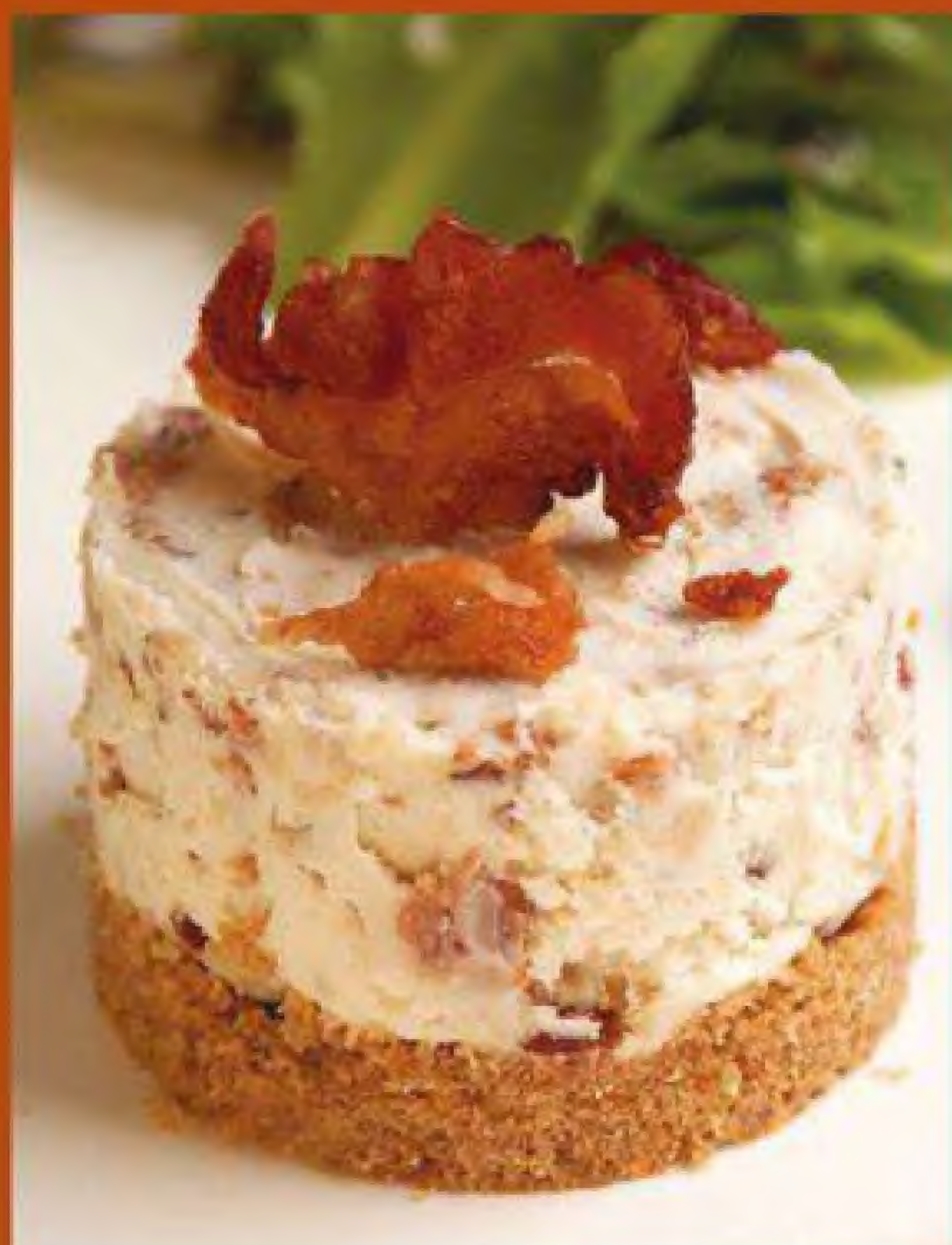


photo by Todd Coleman

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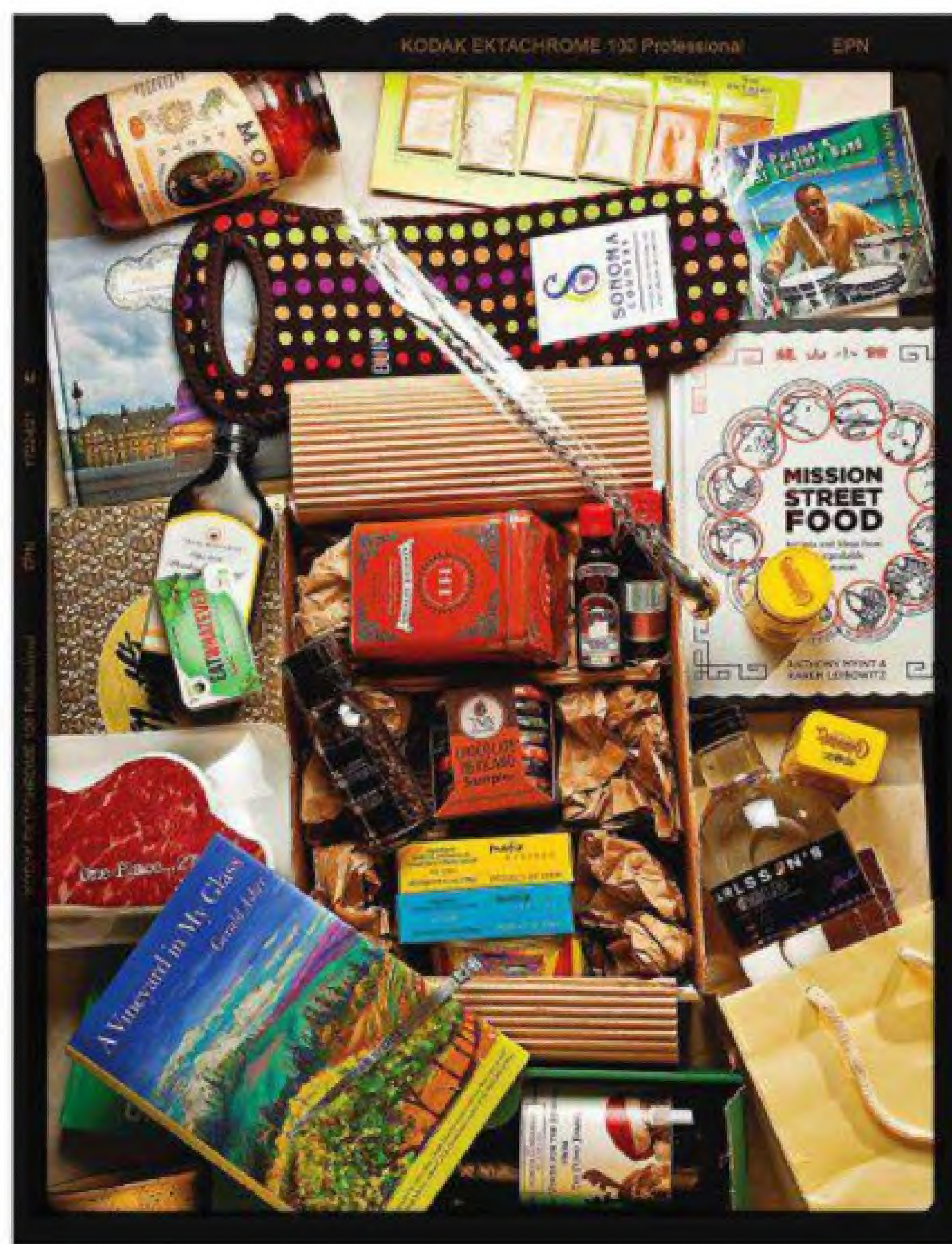


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**FIRST**



## Trip to Bountiful

Every workday at SAVEUR is a movable feast

**I**T HAPPENS EVERY AFTERNOON like clockwork: my three o'clock snack crawl. No matter what I'm doing, I suddenly have the urge to get up from my chair and start scouring the office for delicious things to eat. I'm crashing, my body says. I need salt. Sugar. Fat. Now. That's how I came to know about the incredible candies from Muth's. These Louisville, Kentucky-made sweets—nut brittles, bonbons, and above all, caramels, which we feature in our Source column on page 26—are so addictive that I even found myself stopping into the office after hours to sneak more from the stash on deputy editor Beth Kracklauer's desk. There were boxes and boxes of them. I think I've eaten half. Such are the temptations of life at SAVEUR.

The fact that the proverbial cookie jar is always so close at hand is a privilege we at this magazine don't take lightly. We get sent foods and drinks from purveyors the world over who want us to try their products and tell them what we think. Every day, a veritable parcel post feast arrives: cookies, candies,

chips of all stripes; cheeses and charcuterie and wonderful crackers; spices, sauces, relishes, rubs; teas from Japan, coffees from Ethiopia, wines from around the globe, and always, the latest newfangled soda pop—the fancy artisanal kind and the not-so-fancy, super-sweet fructose-filled kind that I can't resist. (A selection of a recent day's mail is shown above.) For a snacker like me, the daily mail is a balm for that late-afternoon biorhythmic lull. It's a common human condition. Not so common, by dint of my job, is the ready remedy.

And it's not just food and drink we're privvy to at SAVEUR; it's cookbooks, tableware, the latest kitchen gadgets. We're interested in them all; we try them all—and, not just the stuff that comes in through the mail, either. Whether we're on location for a story or just shopping at our local markets, we nibble, we sip, we engage with it all so that we can tell you about the best products from the world of food—and satisfy our own cravings, while we're at it. —JAMES OSELAND, Editor-in-Chief

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A FEW LIMES, A FEW ROCKS, MAYBE TOSS IN SOME JUICE.  
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# FARE

Milestones and Marvels From the World of Food, Plus Agenda and More



## All Grown Up

In Winnipeg, there's a chicken finger even adults can love

**T**HOUGH upscale versions of childhood comfort foods—peanut butter and jelly, corn dogs, s'mores—have colonized restaurant menus, there's one glaring exception. Chicken fingers, the ubiquitous kids' entrée, get little respect.

Chicken fingers came about in the late 1970s, when American

poultry processors began marketing the small, flat tender, or tenderloin, from the underside of the breast as a separate cut. A miniature breaded cutlet, the chicken finger—likely named for its shape, akin to human digits—became a popular way to use the new cut. Paired with a sugary sauce (honey mustard,

barbecue, sweet and sour), they proved to be the perfect utensil-free food for picky children, and by the mid-1980s, it seemed, there wasn't a kids' menu that didn't feature them—as tenders, or worse, as nuggets, made from artificially bonded meat trimmings. According to market research from the Min-

tel Group, chicken fingers were the third most popular item on American menus in 2010, behind steak and Caesar salad.

Still, as popular as chicken fingers are, the consensus among adult eaters was summed up a few years back by David Kamp, writing in the *New York Times*, when he lamented the “palate-



## AGENDA

October 2011

1

Anniversary:

### MANIFESTO OF NOUVELLE CUISINE

1973, Paris, France

In the October 1973 issue of their magazine *Le Nouveau Guide Gault-*



Millau, French restaurant critics Henri Gault and Christian Millau fired the opening shots in the culinary revolution that

would reshape gastronomy. With their ten commandments, which demanded fresher ingredients, lighter sauces, and the freedom to experiment in the kitchen, Gault and Millau urged chefs to launch a coup d'état against classic French cuisine. The Young Turks, as they called themselves, dismantled Escoffier's regime, and while raspberry coulis may no longer be a cause célèbre, the influence of nouvelle cuisine lives on today.

6-9

### PÁLINKA ÉS KOLBÁSZ FÉSZTIVÁL

(Brandy and Sausage Festival) Budapest, Hungary

In Budapest, the Castle Hill neighborhood plays host to this festival



honoring the pairing of *pálinka*, the Hungarian fruit brandy, and *kolbász*, a paprika and caraway-spiced smoked pork sausage. A bellyful of rich *kolbász* is said to counter the effects for fest-goers of multiple shots of *pálinka*s available in upward of 300 flavors, including quince, peach, apricot, pear, and a limited-edition release of a *szilvapálinka*, made from premium plums. Information: palinka.eskolbasz.hu

8

### WEST CAPE MAY LIMA BEAN FESTIVAL



West Cape May, New Jersey Once known as the "lima bean capital east of the Rockies," West Cape May still celebrates its

former status. The pale green bean, once a major cash crop for this southern New Jersey town, is celebrated at this annual harvest festival. Legume-lovers can indulge in soup, salad, or even cake cooked with limas. And for those who don't enjoy eating them, there are items like lima bean earrings for sale and the crowning of the Lima Bean King and Queen. Information: westcapemaytoday.com »

deadening potential" of his kids' favorite food. Chicken fingers, it seemed, would never grow up.

But the generation gap is murkier than it appears. As I discovered recently at Mitzi's Restaurant, in downtown Winnipeg, Canada, a raging chicken finger fan is hiding below the surface of most adults. At this 33-year-old Chinese restaurant, the lunchtime lineup stretches out the door for homemade chicken fingers.

Added to the menu in 1988 by owner Peter Eng, who felt he could do better than the frozen ones his kids were eating, the 125 pounds of fingers served daily at Mitzi's (*mitzi* sounds like the Cantonese word for tasty) are made from scratch. "Others grind [the meat] or mold it," says Shirley Eng, who, like her hus-

## As I discovered recently at Mitzi's, a raging chicken finger fan is hiding below the surface of most adults

band, hails from Hong Kong. "Ours is real chicken." Fresh breasts are sliced into strips, then marinated overnight in salt, pepper, sugar, garlic, paprika, and other seasonings. Flour-dusted and dredged in an egg wash, the chicken is coated in breadcrumbs (ground loaves of supermarket white), and fried in canola oil.

Unlike the uniform fingers most places serve, Mitzi's (see a recipe at right) are thin, short, and slightly gnarled by the fryer's heat. The breading is light and crisp, and the juicy flesh has just enough spicy, sweet flavor to enliven the chicken, which is best dipped in Mitzi's signature honey-dill sauce.

Peter Eng's rendition is so good that a food once irksome to him has turned out to be a boon for business. On Mitzi's predominantly Chinese menu, the non-Asian fingers stick out like a, well, sore thumb. Still, says Shirley Eng, they make up 80 percent of Mitzi's business. —David Sax

## Mitzi's Chicken Fingers

SERVES 6-8

At Mitzi's in Winnipeg, Canada, these chicken fingers are served with crinkle-cut fries, coleslaw, and a honey-dill dipping sauce.

### FOR THE DIPPING SAUCE:

- 1½ cups mayonnaise
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 tbsp. roughly chopped dill
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. dry mustard powder
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

### FOR THE CHICKEN FINGERS:

- 2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 3"-long-by-1"-wide strips
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 tbsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1½ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. dry mustard powder
- 1 cup flour
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 3 cups finely ground fresh breadcrumbs or panko

**1** Make the dipping sauce: In a medium bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise with the honey, dill, mustard powder, and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper, and stir together until smooth; set honey-dill dipping sauce aside.

**2** Make the chicken fingers: In a medium bowl, toss together chicken, sugar, salt, pepper, garlic powder, paprika, and mustard; set aside. Place flour, eggs, and breadcrumbs in 3 separate shallow dishes; set aside. Pour oil to a depth of 2" into a 6-qt. Dutch oven; heat over medium-high heat until deep-fry thermometer reads 325°. Working in batches, coat chicken in flour, shake off excess, and dip in eggs; coat in breadcrumbs. Fry chicken until golden brown and crisp, about 3 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Repeat with remaining chicken. Serve with dipping sauce.

## 5 to Try

# Smokin' Good

The best mail-order bacons

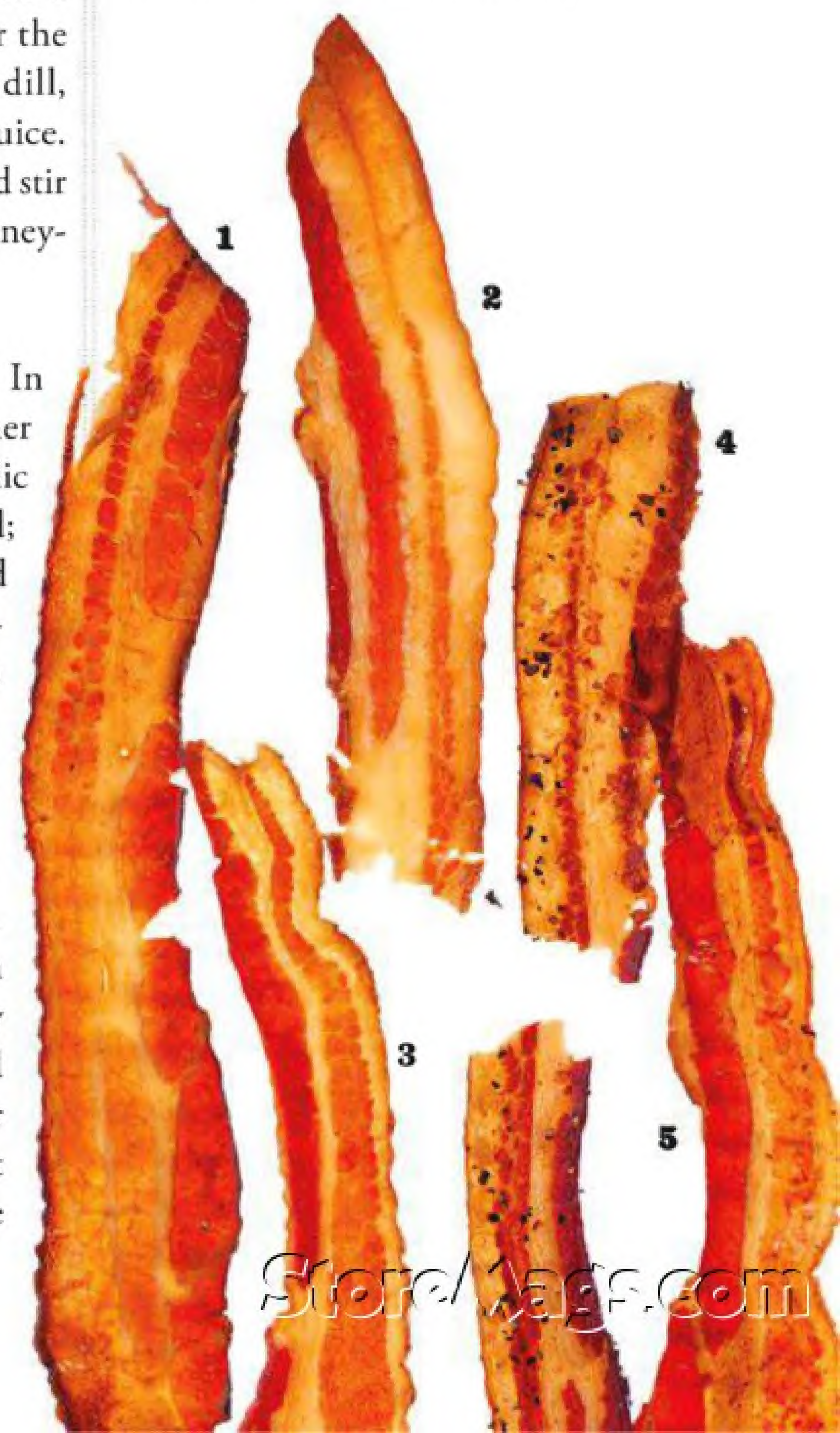
**1. Benton's Hickory-Smoked Bacon** (423/442-5003; *bentonscountryhams2.com*) Tennessee's Allan Benton produces the granddaddy of dry-cured bacon. You smell the hickory before you open the box.

**2. Dreymler and Kray Beer Bacon** (847/688-2271; *dreymlerandkray.com*) A pale ale brine, followed by applewood smoking, yields a nutty flavor and a sweet finish to this Illinois-made bacon.

**3. Nueske's Wild Cherry-Smoked Bacon** (800/392-2266; *nueskes.com*) The Nueskes, smoking bacon in Wisconsin since 1882, skip the cure for this mellow bacon.

**4. Broadbent's Pepper Bacon** (800/841-2202; *broadbenthams.com*) Dry-curing with black pepper makes for a distinctive, piquant bacon from this Kentucky producer.

**5. S. Wallace Edwards & Sons** (800/222-4267; *virginiatraditions.com*) This Virginia family has been curing bacon for 85 years; experience shows in their balanced, hickory-smoked slab. —Geoff Dougherty



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# Party in the Parking Lot

Tailgates bring hungry rivals together

**W**E THOUGHT we were early. We pulled into Penn State's Beaver Stadium at 5:30 A.M. for the festivities before a 1:00 P.M. football game. It was still dark, and the mist hadn't broken yet, but the tailgate party was already underway. People were milling about, cracking open beers, setting up tents. We were immediately drawn in by the hospitality. "Hey," a woman beckoned us over to her grill. "You want a grilled cinnamon roll? It's a Penn State tradition." She took one off the grate and handed it to me like I was a long-lost friend. "This your first tailgate?" she asked. My wife said yes as I bit into the roll. Its bottom was crisp, the glaze on top was melted, and the pastry was warm and welcomingly sweet. The woman said, "Then you two are in for a treat." She started slicing venison on a folding table for a batch of chili.

College football and food have always been linked. How tailgating began is debatable—some claim it dates back to Roman times; others say the idea sprang from spectators gathering to picnic on a hill while watching the Civil War battle of Bull Run, in 1861. Regardless, what's clear is that in 1869, before and after Rutgers played Princeton in what is considered the first college football game, the fans were as interested in the picnics going on around the field as they were in the game itself.

Nowadays, tailgates have evolved into mobile feasts: face-to-face social networks where

complete strangers bond over food and drink, and everyone is eager to share. No one style of cooking is right or wrong, although certain universities are known for specific foods: stuffed roasted peppers at the University of Southern California, the University of Mississippi's fried chicken, barbecued ribs at the University of Tennessee.

But in Tallahassee, when Florida State University is playing archrival University of Florida, amid the good-natured put-downs tossed back and forth by the fans, you find snack foods from bratwurst to fried alligator, which seems more commentary on University of Florida's mascot than delicacy. Mostly, though, you'll see some serious cooking: king crab legs boiling in huge pots with potatoes and corn, pork shoulders in improvised smokers, peas with smoked ham, turkeys in deep fryers, buffalo wings fried on portable gas grills, and spicy cabbage-and-pepper slaw to make hot dogs less pedestrian.

And there is no shortage of dessert: red velvet brownies, pecan pie, Key lime pie. Fans have even been known to bring cupcakes decorated in both teams' colors. It's a reminder that there really is only one rule to having a great tailgate party: Always bring enough for everyone—no matter which team you're rooting for.

—Greg Ferro

**Grilling sausages at a tailgate party outside Florida State University's Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee**









## 8-9

### SAUERKRAUT FESTIVAL

Waynesville, Ohio

Each fall, vendors at this festival in southwestern Ohio dish out more than 14,000 pounds of oak cask-aged sauerkraut. The brined-cabbage pickle is featured in traditional fare such as rubeens, sauerkraut soup, kraut dogs, and cabbage rolls handmade by parishioners in the basement of Waynesville's St. Augustine Church. Lovers of odd foods should try the sauerkraut doughnuts, fudge, and pizza. Information: sauerkrautfestival.com

## 12-15

### PYESTANG TUGAK

(Frog Festival)

San Fernando, Philippines

It's not easy being green in Pamganga province, in the Philippines, in October. That's when the *tugak tutu* (a native frog prized for its flavor) is celebrated by citizens of the city of San Fernando. The nine-year-old festival offers frog-based dishes like *betute*, dressed frog stuffed with minced pork and frog meat, garlic, onion, lemongrass, and ginger. Visitors can enter a frog-catching competition, cheer on frog athletes in the frog Olympics, and don green gear in a frog-costume contest. Information: cityofsanfernando.gov.ph

## 13-16

### FIFTH ANNUAL NYC FOOD FILM FESTIVAL

New York, New York

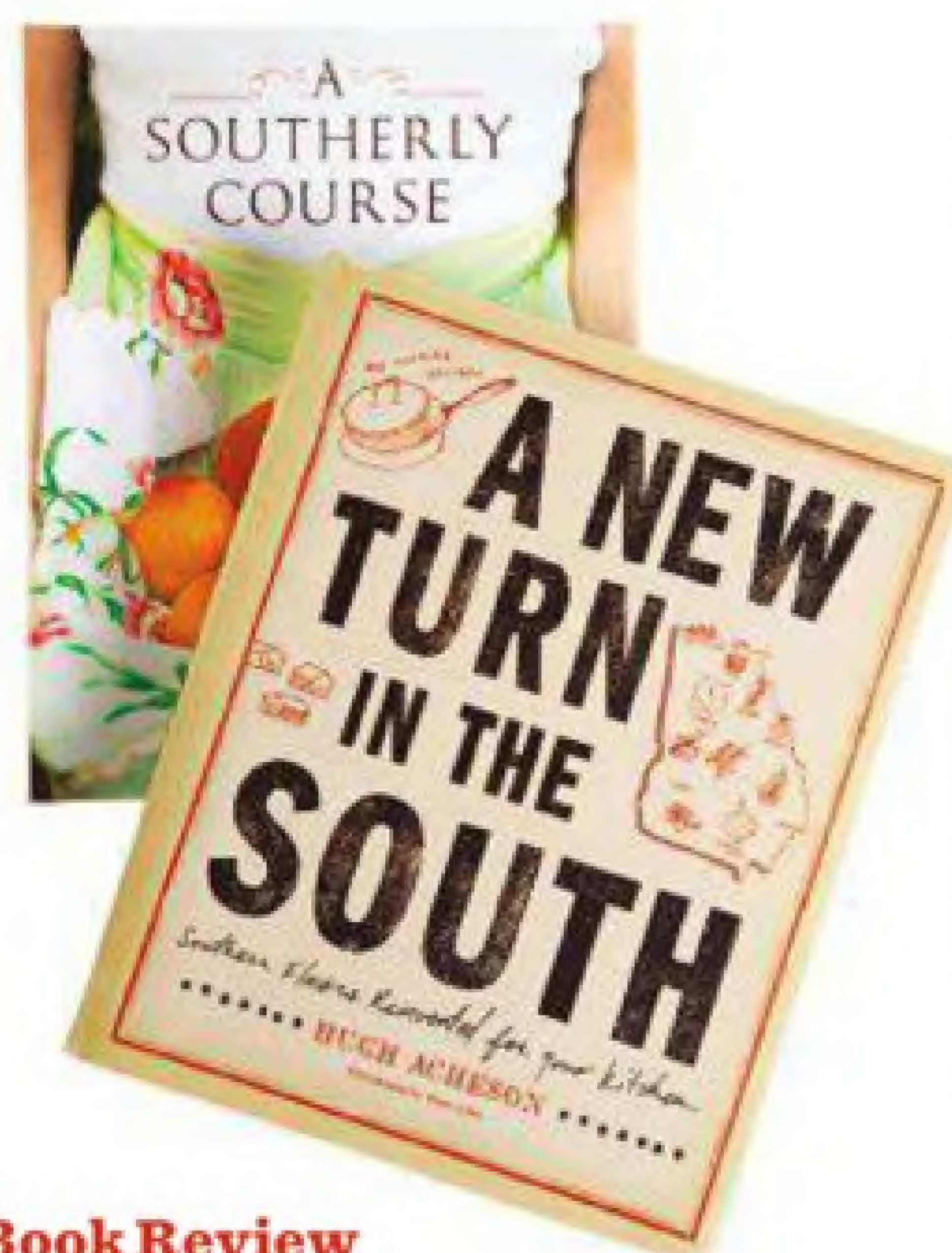
Film buffs hungry for more than just popcorn feast their eyes on the documentaries, features, and shorts at the world's largest food film festival, now in its fifth year. After screenings, audiences sample the foods from the films in themed tasting sessions prepared by guest chefs. Previous years' repasts have included barbecued pig for 1,000 viewers of Joe York's *Whole Hog*, a documentary about Tennessee barbecue culture; and chef Brad Farmerie's ten-course mushroom feast as a finale for director Ron Mann's *Know Your Mushroom*. Information: nycfoodfilmfestival.com

## 15-16

### WELLFLEET OYSTERFEST

Wellfleet, Massachusetts

Wellfleet's population swells as mollusk-loving hordes descend on the town to slurp up 150,000 clams and oysters at this annual outdoor fête on Cape Cod, now in its 11th year. A highlight of the raw, fried, grilled, steamed, and stewed feast is the always-exciting oyster shuck-off. Contestants, as precise and speedy as »



### Book Review

## Sweet and Tart

Approaching Southern cooking from opposite directions

I GREW UP ON a Deep South farm where daylilies bloomed in summer. But I never saw a cook whip up an apricot mousse served in flutes lined with daylilies. Martha Hall Foose has. In *A*



*Southerly Course: Recipes & Stories from Close to Home* (Clarkson Potter, 2011)—her quirkily annotated volume of recipes for everything from beer-marinated frog legs to butterscotch pots de crème—kitsch and sentimentality get sopped together like cornbread and syrup. Congealed salads she likens to beauty queens, “some demure in pink pastels of a chiffon nature, others a touch garish in light-diffracting lime green.” She creates recipes in homage of Southern icons: James Brown gets mashed purple sweet potatoes, Eudora Welty an egg-custard pie. After the whimsy, she dispatches crisp recipes. I’m keeping her hominy salad—a bright cheddar and mayo affair—on call as my potato-salad understudy.

While Foose stays on the family plantation, Hugh Acheson ventures far from his native Ottawa, Canada, to find inspiration in his adopted state of Georgia. Free of the nostalgia that drips from many a Southern cookbook, Acheson’s *A New Turn in the South* (Clarkson Potter, 2011) expresses an outsider’s quest for the culinary essence of a place. The Athens-based chef mashes boiled peanuts into hummus, returns Brunswick Stew to its gamey origins by throwing rabbit into the pot, and has a passion for pickling—relishes, chow-chows, shrimp (see a recipe, right). I have never known a cook this crazy for vinegar: Roasted chicken thighs and pearl onions get a reduction of cane vinegar; sorghum vinaigrette gives a sweet-mustardy edge to sliced duck. Tartness may be in Acheson’s bones. But there is evidence of surrender. Though

his instructions are mostly as straightforward as his flavors, he sometimes lapses into fairy-tale speak. When peeling tiny Brussels sprouts, he says, “Pretend you are a giant working on cabbages.” By dessert, he almost sounds like a Southerner: “Molten chocolate cake,” he says, “has nothing on a peach pie.” —Wendell Brock

### Pickled Shrimp

MAKES ABOUT 6 CUPS

Frozen shrimp are a fine substitute for fresh in this recipe from Hugh Acheson’s *A New Turn in the South* (Clarkson Potter, 2011).

- 2 tbsp. Old Bay seasoning
- 1 lb. (26–30 count) medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ tsp. celery seeds
- ¼ tsp. allspice berries
- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ⅓ cup fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup packed flat-leaf parsley leaves, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 12 dried bay leaves
- ½ medium yellow onion, thinly sliced lengthwise

**1** Bring Old Bay and 8 cups water to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan; add shrimp, reduce heat to low, and cook until shrimp are pink, about 2 minutes. Drain and transfer to bowl of ice water to chill; drain again.

**2** Finely grind celery seeds and allspice in a spice grinder; transfer to a bowl and stir in oil, juice, parsley, salt, chile flakes, garlic, and bay leaves. In a 1-qt. glass jar, layer shrimp and onions; pour over oil mixture. Cover with lid; chill overnight before serving.

## One Good Bottle

Last year, I found myself in Macerata, a town in Italy’s Le Marche region known for its summer opera festival. But it wasn’t arias I was seeking; it was lunch. At a homey trattoria called Da Rosa, I dug into the *vincigrassi*, a regional style of lasagna made with offal ragù. The dish called for a glass of red wine, and so it was that I had my first shocking mouthful—or, rather, noseful—of the region’s wildly floral *lacrima di Morro d’Alba*. Made from a grape native to its eponymous town, *lacrima* (which means teardrop, a possible reference to the fruit’s shape) is worth discovering. Produced by the Garofoli family, fifth-generation winemakers, the medium-bodied **Kerria Lacrima Di Morro D’Alba 2009** (\$14) smells of lavender and roses dusted with white pepper. To that aromatic pleasure, add fresh, tangy red fruit flavors and decent tannins, and you’ve got a wine to pair with rustic meats—a great fall picnic bottle. —Betsy Andrews





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» skilled picklocks, add to the four-plus tons of shells that the group behind the event, Shellfish Promotion and Tasting, will recycle afterward. At stake: \$1,000 and a spot in the national competition held in Maryland. Information: well-fleetoysterfest.org

26

**CHARLES WILLIAM POST**  
1854, Springfield, Illinois  
Charles William Post was in his 40s when he started making cereal, but he lived to see his products become American breakfast classics. An early adherent of modern print advertising, Post reached kitchens nationwide starting in 1895 with ads for “Postum”, a grain-based coffee substitute. Grape-Nuts, introduced in 1897, were an immediate success, and Post’s version of shredded wheat has been a staple of pantries across the country for more than 100 years.



24-27

**GANGGYEONG FERMENTED SEAFOOD FESTIVAL**  
Ganggyeong, Korea  
Fermented seafood, or *jeotgal*, is a staple of Korean cooking, and the town of Ganggyeong in South Korea produces nearly half of the nation’s supply. Each October, thousands converge on the town’s 200-year-old market to celebrate its famous *jeotgal*. Festivalgoers get their fill of fermented seafood by sampling kimchi in rice rolls and rice balls. Hands-on demonstrations of these and other dishes are a big draw, and participants can eat or take home what they make. Other highlights of the four-day event include a prawn-catching exhibition, a fermented seafood cook-off, and musical performances. Information: english.visitkorea.or.kr.

28

**THE VOLSTEAD ACT**  
1919, United States of America  
Supported by temperance groups, dry businessmen, religious leaders, and nationalists, the 1919 Volstead Act forbade the manufacture and sale of beverages greater than 0.5 percent alcohol. The ensuing Prohibition (repealed in 1933) altered the cultural landscape, influencing the rise of organized crime, the implementation of women’s rights, and, of course, the way the nation drinks. In time for the act’s anniversary this year comes filmmaker Ken Burns’ latest American chronicle: *Prohibition*, a three-part series rich with archival footage, premiering on PBS, October 2-4.



Edible Enemies

A culinary answer to an environmental scourge  
**I**T’S LOW TIDE this spring day in Connecticut. Children hop along the shore, flipping rocks over, sending green crabs scurrying. Nearby, Bun Lai grabs the critters, dropping them into a bucket. Lai is the chef at Miya’s Sushi in New Haven, Connecticut, one of a handful of sustainable sushi restaurants in the U.S. He’s collecting these Asian shore crabs to serve atop sushi rolls. When deep-fried, the bite-size crustaceans crunch like potato chips. You’d never know that, in the wild, these tiny crabs are a huge problem.  
A voracious eater of local mussels, the Asian shore crab was likely introduced into Atlantic waters when a ship released ballast water (seawater taken in to stabilize its weight during transit). Sometimes such water contains stowaway creatures, which may, like the shore crab, become invasive—when introduced into a new environment, they can

cause ecological damage. Plants and animals like these, which hitch rides on ships’ hulls, in ballast water, and in shipping crates, have a special place on Lai’s menu.  
Lai’s mother, Yoshiko, started Miya’s as a traditional Japanese eatery in 1982. Bun, whose father is Chinese, rose through the ranks to chef, then turned the menu on its head. “My cuisine is based in part on my Chinese heritage. In China, they eat many things that Americans don’t consider edible,” says Lai. “A lot of these ‘non-foods’ are also invasive.”  
Lai pickles Japanese knotweed, an asparagus-flavored perennial that crowds out native plant species; Asian Pacific red algae, which compete with seaweeds native to the Sound, is seasoned and baked for chips. And he makes a roll wrapped in the vegetation-choking kudzu vine introduced here in the Japanese Pavilion during the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. He also cooks with moon snails, which destroy local clam populations. Grilled and served with lime juice, the snails taste like conch.

Miya’s is at the forefront of an “invasivore” movement gaining traction nationwide. On Florida’s Key Largo, lionfish, a reef fish-killing Indo-Pacific species with mild, tender flesh, is popular at the Fish House Encore Restaurant. Invasivore dinners staged by restaurants like Heaven City in Milwaukee have included lake-destroying Asian carp and seafloor-damaging cow nose rays. *The Invasive Species Cookbook*, by J.M. Franke (Bradford Street Press, 2006), offers recipes for nutria and starlings.  
Bun Lai, for his part, seeks more foes to feast upon. He’s working on a sashimi of African blue tilapia, a fish farm escapee that aggressively takes over habitats. Sea squirts are also in his sights.  
“I want people to be aware that invasive species are environmental destructors, but they have food value,” says the chef. “Putting them on my menu starts the conversation.” —Ramin Ganeshram  
**Edible invasive Pacific species, clockwise, from top left: tender-fleshed lionfish; cow nose ray; Asian carp; kudzu, a green bean-flavored vine; Asian shore crab; and red algae, which becomes crunchy when baked.**



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# Work Horses

The secret life of a favorite showpiece

**B**ACK IN 1965, John Ulam wasn't thinking about pots. Lyndon Johnson had signed the Coinage Act in response to a silver scarcity, and the Canonsburg, Pennsylvania metallurgist, who had found a way to bond different metals together, was helping the U.S. Mint switch from silver coins to layered metal ones.

Realizing that his process would be applicable to more items, Ulam next focused his efforts on cookware. By the early '70s, his company, All-Clad Metalcrafters, was wrapping easy-to-clean stainless steel around heat-conducting aluminum to make pans. A copper-core line came later, as did other types of cladding. Heavy, gleaming, and pricey, All-Clad became the trophy pan of aspirational home cooks. What those cooks may not realize is that, when they dine out, their food is likely prepared in All-Clad, too. Among chefs who cook with All-Clad are Thomas Keller, Daniel Boulud, and David Chang. You wouldn't know it by the All-Clads' flashy looks, but as I learned in my years of cooking in restaurant kitchens, they don't warp or develop hot spots; they really hold up to abuse.

Some years ago, I revamped my own kitchen. My first step to the new space was buying an All-Clad frying pan—the same one I used at work. As I left the store, its familiar heft made me smile. I went right home and cooked pork scallopine. I've since bought casseroles, saucier pans, and windsors. Sure, they look fancy hung over my stove. But they're workhorses just the same. —Todd Coleman

THE PANTRY, page 106: Visiting Mitzi's, buying Kerria Lacrima Di Morro D'Alba, and more.

## 2-Qt. Saucier

When I make easy-to-scorch sauces, this pan's curved sides allow my whisk to get into the corners.

## 4-Qt. Casserole

A sturdy classic, its thick bottom makes it perfect for my stove-to-oven style of braising lamb curry.

## 14" Fry Pan

I throw this copper-core pan on high heat to quickly sear steaks and fish.

## 8-Qt. Stock Pot

This is the vessel I reach for when I make stock; its high sides prevent excessive evaporation.

## 2-Qt. Sauce Pan

I reserve this vessel for finishing touches, whether emulsifying butter into a sauce or steaming vegetables.

## 2.5-Qt. Windsor

This quirky pot is a secret favorite; its flared sides make it a cross between a sauce pan and a skillet.

## 3-Qt. Sauté Pan

My luscious chicken fricassee owes much of its success to this pan's moisture-trapping straight sides.

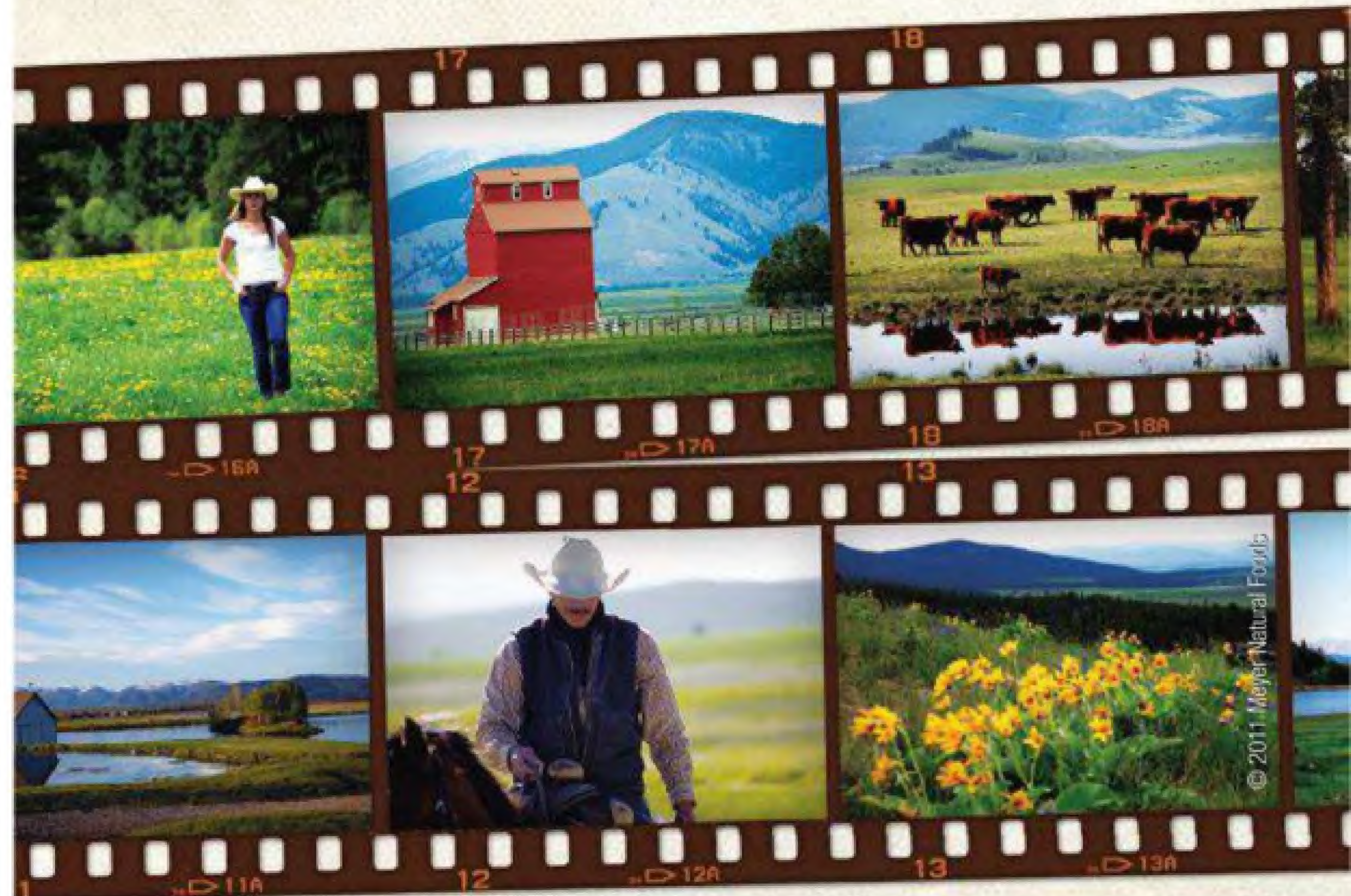
## 5.5-Qt. Dutch Oven

When I'm cooking for a crowd, this voluminous pot holds a huge batch of chili. —T.C.

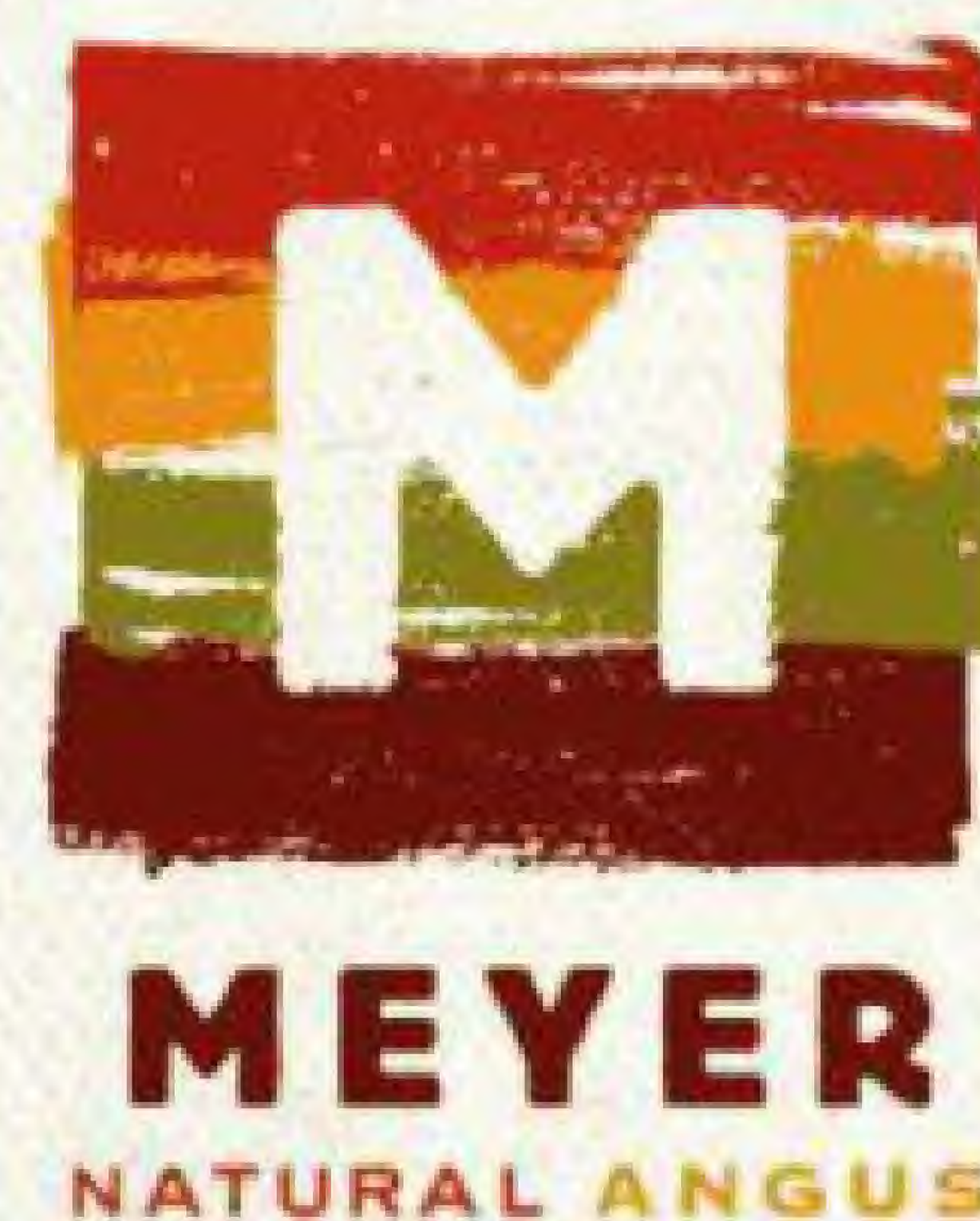


## Worldwide Feast

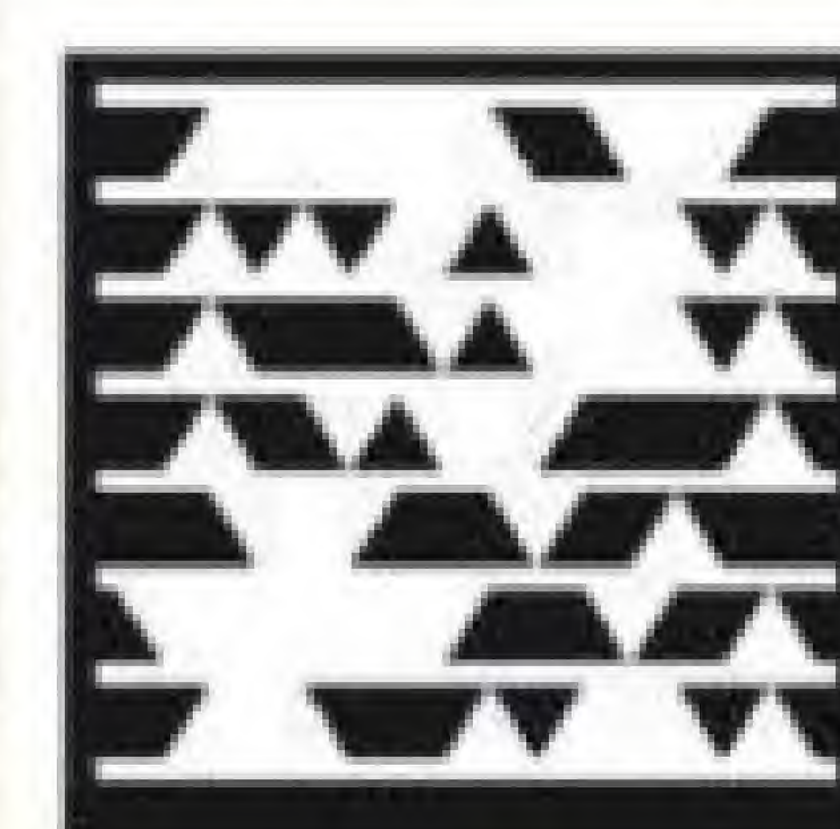
Here at SAVEUR.COM, we've combed the web to find smart, gastronomically-inclined bloggers in virtually every country on Earth, folks committed to celebrating regional recipes, restaurants, techniques, and ingredients. These food ambassadors show us how to eat like the locals do; we draw on their blogs as culinary guides to everyday life in specific places all over the globe. On the blog Eating Asia (eatingasia.typepad.com), one of our favorites, writer Robyn Eckhardt and photographer David Hagerman use their home base in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as a jumping-off point to explore street-market foods throughout Southeast Asia. Each post—on grilled *sai oua* sausage in northern Thailand, for example, or purple flower-tinted rice salad in Kelantan, Malaysia—captures the mind-boggling diversity of the region's cuisine with insider tips (like how to order savory soy milk in Taiwan) and lush photography (Hagerman photographed "Hungry City," starting on page 52 in this issue). Theirs is just one of the many websites we've gathered on our curated page of great global food blogs; see them all at [SAVEUR.COM/GLOBAL](http://SAVEUR.COM/GLOBAL). 🦋



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## SOURCE



# Sharing the Love

A Louisville candy store keeps on doing what it does best

BY BETH KRACKLAUER

**I**T WOULD BE EASY to miss the small storefront in downtown Louisville, Kentucky, that houses Muth's Candies. I'm lucky enough to have relatives in the know; they're among the loyal Louisvillians who have continued to beat a path to Muth's door for 90 years now. The candy is that good.

The selection is extensive—more so, really, than seems practical for an operation of this modest size. There are 14 flavors of cream-filled chocolates, each hand-decorated with a mark indicating the flavor of the filling: a *B* for buttercream, a star for banana, an *M* for mint. “We’ve all been doing this since we were kids,” says third-generation proprietor Martha Vories. “The hardest thing is to dip the chocolate. It’s like, you can sing or you can’t; you can draw or you can’t.”

There are also eight different kinds of

nut brittle ①; orange, raspberry, and lemon jellies ② swaddled in dark or milk chocolate; Kentucky bourbon bonbons ③ with a semisweet-chocolate coating and a boozy kick; addictive, chocolate-coated molasses chips called Honeycombs ④ that snap between your teeth. And let’s not forget the luscious caramels in vanilla ⑤, chocolate, coconut, vanilla-pecan, licorice, ribbon ⑥ (that’s chocolate and vanilla with nougat in between), and raspberry-raisin ⑦ flavors. “Ours contain a lot more cream than other caramels,” Vories says. “Real cream. There are always companies trying to sell me powdered cream, powdered butter. Um, *no*.”

My favorite is the Modjeska ⑧, a caramel-covered marshmallow named for the Polish actress Helena Modjeska, who made quite a splash when she performed in the city back in

1883. It’s made as it always has been, using the same copper pots and carefully maintained equipment, in a room at the back of the shop. Poke your head in and you’ll likely find not only Vories but also her sisters Rose Ann Stacy and Pam Hensley, often her brother, Stanley J. Bennett Jr., and whichever nieces, nephews, and family friends are on hand to pitch in.

The shop’s weathered the Depression, the great flood of 1937, World War II—when friends shared their sugar rations to keep the place going—and nearly a century’s worth of changing tastes and rising costs. But the original recipes remain sacrosanct. “That’s how it is,” Vories says. “You do this job for love, not for money.” Prices range from \$2.25 for a bag of peppermint sticks to \$40 for a two-pound deluxe chocolate assortment. To order, call 800/556-8847 or visit muthscandy.com. 🐾

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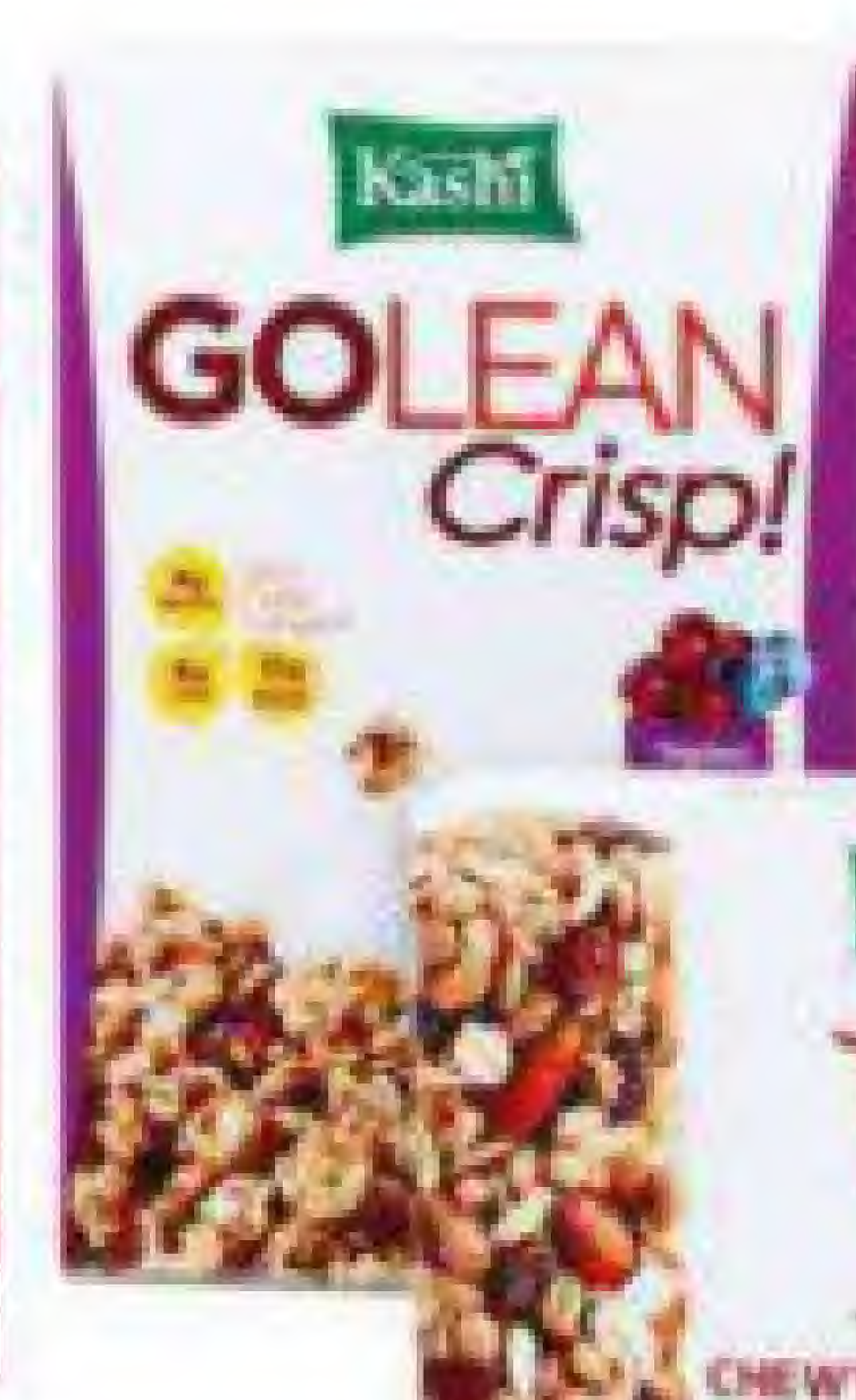


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## Butchers' Banquet

In a rural English town, pork pies, sausages, and proper roast dinners are a way of life

BY BETH KRACKLAUER

**N**O MAJOR HIGHWAY will take you all the way to the Lincolnshire Wolds, an austere, gently undulating landscape at the eastern edge of England. There's an uncanny beauty to the place, remote and sparsely populated as it is. "We're on the road to nowhere, really," was the way Jim Sutcliffe put it to me the last time I visited that part of England.

Sutcliffe is a butcher in Louth (rhymes with "mouth"), also known as the Capital of the Wolds. It's an exceptionally good place to be a butcher, not to mention visit one, with no fewer than five in this small town. Louth's relative isolation has made it a veritable Galápagos of Lincolnshire butchering traditions. I went there to observe the delicate balance of environment, resources, and relationships that allows a distinctive regional cuisine to flourish. And because I love a pork pie.

The name of Sutcliffe's shop is Meridian Meats—as in the Prime Meridian, the line of longitude that runs down one side of the store and through the farm nine miles due south where the Sutcliffe family raises cattle and sheep. The family opened the shop in 2008, after a butcher who'd long occupied the space retired. Sutcliffe is earnest, baby-faced; even so, I was surprised to learn that he's just 25 years old. When I asked why he became a butcher, his answer was both philosophical and practical. "It benefits me on both sides, being a farmer and a butcher," Sutcliffe said. "You spend the best part of two years putting tender loving care into the animal. I know what qualities I need as a butcher—the size and the shape and the cover of the fat. Our animals are slaughtered at a small abattoir very close by. I can monitor all of it." Still a teenager when he decided to seek an apprenticeship, he began in the only way he could think of: by writing letters to all the butchers in Lincolnshire. Finally, Eric Phipps, in the nearby town of Mareham-le-Fen—a butcher so old-school he slaughtered animals in his own abattoir behind his shop—agreed to teach Sutcliffe what he knew.

That included how to cure and stuff a chine, a meaty cut from between the shoulders of the pig that is found only in Lincolnshire. "The native Lincolnshire Curly Coat pig was hellishly fat," Sutcliffe explained of the now-extinct breed. "They'd keep them until they were something like 40 stone [560 pounds], and there would be two or three inches of fat on the

back." Once it was slaughtered—typically in cool weather—and hung up overnight, that layer of fat would solidify, making the animal difficult to break down. "They would have looked at it and said, Right, it's easier to cut through the ribs either side of the backbone than it is to cut through the middle of the backbone," Sutcliffe said. After brining, the chine is scored with deep slits, stuffed with chopped parsley, and simmered. Sliced thin and served on buttered bread with malt vinegar, the cured pork striated with herbs is one of the world's great cold cuts.

At Meridian Meats they also make excellent Lincolnshire sausages, plump links of coarse-ground pork with a sage fragrance so bracing it sets the endorphins firing even as the meat is browning in the pan. They've always been my favorite of the English regional sausages; I like to bake

them in a Yorkshire pudding batter to make toad in the hole. There is haslet, too, a pork meat loaf loaded with liver and wrapped in caul fat, which binds the meat and melts into it during cooking. There are cuts of Wolds lamb and well-marbled Lincoln Red beef, as well as Berkshire pork from Sutcliffe's farm and a few of his neighbors'. And there are baked goods, as butchers here are often bakers, too (what with all that extra lard lying around): Lincolnshire plum loaf, lemon drizzle cake, and, oh, those meat pies.

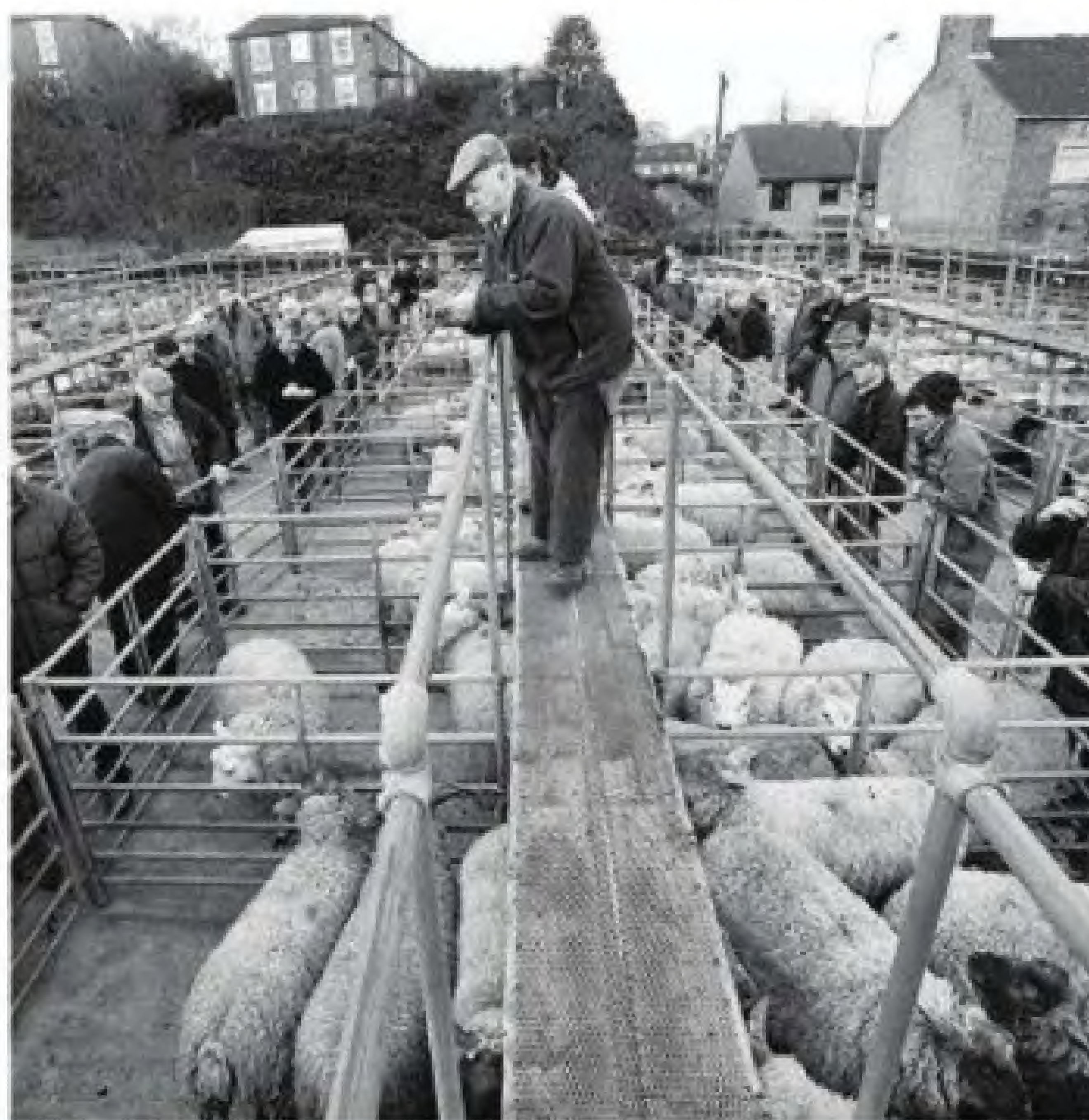
The king of them all, the pork pie, is a magnificent and utterly medieval raised pastry in a rich lard crust with a pork gelatin lining and a core of rustic pork terrine. In fact, the whole shop looked to me like an old Dutch still life—maybe an allegory of abundance and fleeting earthly pleasures—from the fleshy pigs' ears and trotters displayed up front to the jewel-toned jars of mint sauce, red currant jelly, and apple chutney lining the back wall. To the people filing in and out dragging their wheeled carts behind them, it was just another week's shopping.

ALL OF THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT Sutcliffe is not keeping up with the times. He blogs. He posts videos to a Meridian Meats YouTube channel. (My favorite is "Lamb Butchery 1," but "Silent Sausage Making" is pretty great, too.) Still, Louth is a traditional market town, and certain rhythms and routines have persisted since the Middle Ages. To begin to understand the place, you should be there, as I was, on a Wednesday, early. This is market day, when the tidy Georgian red brick town center is given over to rows of stalls selling everything from fresh produce to fish cakes made in the nearby town of Grimsby, on



Local farmers gather at Melanies restaurant in the town of Louth, on the Lincolnshire Wolds, for a weekly roast lunch.





Clockwise from top: Toad in the hole, a classic British dish of sausage baked in a Yorkshire pudding batter; auctiongoers appraise the sheep at Louth's weekly livestock market; steak and Stilton pies.

the North Sea. It's an event, and people show up from the surrounding countryside to take part.

The next day, I headed to Louth's weekly livestock market—the last of its kind in Lincolnshire—just a few minutes' walk from the town center. Michael Read keeps a herd of Lincoln Red cows in the River Bain Valley, in the southwestern corner of the Wolds. On the morning he met me, he planned to auction a couple of his cows. Read explained that the Lincoln Red is an animal that reflects the climate and culture of Lincolnshire in its DNA. "Our natives were bred for meat, warmth, milk, and tallow," he told me. "It's why the Lincoln Red has such a fine texture and superb marbling."

We were outside the low-slung redbrick market building, near where the sheep were being auctioned. Farmers wearing tweed caps and thigh-high gaiters milled around the pens, pointing out particularly fine animals with long crooks. It was a convivial scene, and when the auctioneer appeared on a scaffold above the sheep pens to begin the

bidding, it was a low-key business all around.

Inside at the cattle auction, the atmosphere was more charged. David Williams, an auctioneer in a white coat, stood on a grandstand overlooking a large pen; an audience of farmers, butchers, and wholesalers crowded around and also looked on keenly from a row of risers. One by one, cows were released into the pen snorting and stomping, and the auctioneer called steadily in his velvety BBC radio announcer-ish voice. "Good bullock here weighing 660. Start at 30. 31, 32, 33—come again—33." Read pointed out to me the subtle signals the bidders were making, sometimes nothing more than a wink, or a lift of a finger; I couldn't imagine how the auctioneer could possibly keep track. "58, 58, 58. 60, then? Oh, I thought you would with a heifer like that."

After the auction, I walked down to Lakings of Louth, a butcher in business since 1908, to meet the 80-year-old proprietor, John Laking. "I bought one beast up at auction today, from Robert Needham," he told me as he led me through the busy store. "His grandfather sold to my grandfather." Behind the shop was a warren of rooms full of people in white trilby hats and aprons, taking apart carcasses with handsaws, baking meat pies. I asked Laking if he'd noticed any effect on his business with the opening of a new supermarket in town. "People around


**Seared in a blazing hot skillet, the meat was intensely flavorful, with a generous marbling of scrumptious fat**

here don't buy meat from a supermarket," was his firm reply. "They know their butcher."

Still, things have changed over the course of Laking's lifetime. When he was born in 1931, there were around five times as many butchers in Louth, and until the mid-1980s, animals were butchered in an abattoir in town. Laking shook his head when he talked about health-conscious trends of the latter part of the 20th century and the demand for leaner meat. "Now we're finding our customers want meat with a bit more finish on it again," he said with some satisfaction.

The following afternoon, Laking joined Michael Read and 10 other local farmers for a weekly lunch that's been going on at least since their fathers' time. In recent years this Friday ritual has taken place at a restaurant called Melanies. Each week, chef-owner Steven Legg roasts

a rib of beef raised by one of the farmers and butchered by Laking. An English roast dinner always feels momentous; this one was no exception. The plates were piled with Yorkshire pudding, parsnip mash, and a crisp-fried bubble and squeak made from roasted root vegetables, with boats of beef gravy set at every other place. Anticipation mounted until Legg's wife, Aileen, presented the roast and one of the farmers was designated as carver. "If someone's done well at a livestock show," Legg murmured, "they've been known to have Champagne."

Later that evening, I cooked a little feast of my own in the apartment where I was staying. The centerpiece was a thick steak of Lincoln Red beef Jim Sutcliffe had cut for me earlier that day. "You have to respect this process right through," he told me. "Somebody's calved that cow on a wet night at 2 A.M. It's sacrificed its life to feed us." Seared in a blazing hot skillet, the meat was deep red and intensely flavorful, with a buttery texture and—just as I'd been promised—a generous marbling of scrumptious fat. I've never had another steak like it. 





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### Pork Pie

SERVES 8-10

Pork pies (pictured above) are typically served cold, often with a dollop of English mustard.

#### FOR THE PASTRY:

- 1 cup lard, cubed and chilled
- 4½ cups flour
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

#### FOR THE BROTH AND FILLING:

- 1 lb. pig's feet
- 8 oz. pork bones
- 6 whole black peppercorns
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 1 rib celery, roughly chopped
- 1 bunch flat-leaf parsley
- 2 lb. pork shoulder, trimmed and cut into ¼" cubes
- 8 oz. pork belly, cut into ¼" cubes
- 8 oz. slab bacon, cut into ¼" cubes
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, plus more
- ½ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- ½ tsp. ground mace
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- ½ tsp. ground white pepper

**1** Make the pastry: Rub lard into flour and salt in a bowl until pea-size crumbles form. Add 1 cup cold water; stir until dough forms. Shape into a disk; wrap and chill.

**2** Make the broth and filling: Bring feet, bones, peppercorns, onion, carrot, celery, parsley, and 3 qts. water to a simmer in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-low heat; cook for 1 hour; strain into a 4-qt. saucepan. Bring to a boil; cook until reduced to 2 cups, 25-30 minutes. In a bowl, toss together shoulder, belly, bacon, salt,

nutmeg, mace, and peppers; chill broth and filling separately.

**3** Heat oven to 350°. Roll ⅔ of the dough into a ¼"-thick circle; transfer to an 8" springform pan and line bottom and sides. Place filling in pan; brush dough edge with egg. Roll remaining dough into a ¼"-thick circle; place over filling. Trim and fold under edges; crimp to seal. Cut out a 1¼"-wide hole in center of top pastry. Bake for 30 minutes, reduce oven temperature to 325°, and bake for 90 minutes. Brush pie with egg; bake until golden, 25-30 minutes. Let pie cool, then gradually pour reserved broth into the hole in top of pastry, waiting occasionally for it to distribute through the pie, before adding more. Chill pie to set broth into a jelly before serving.

### Toad in the Hole

SERVES 6

Onion gravy is a delicious match for this comforting dish (pictured on page 30) of sausages baked in a Yorkshire pudding batter.

- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 large yellow onions, sliced
- 1½ cups plus 1 tbsp. flour
- 2 cups beef stock
- ⅓ cup madeira wine
- ½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tsp. dry mustard
- 1¼ cups milk
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 8 tbsp. rendered bacon fat
- 6 slices prosciutto
- 6 large pork sausages (see page 106)

**1** Make onion gravy: Heat butter in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-low heat; add onions, and cook until golden brown, about 40 minutes. Stir in 1 tbsp. flour; add stock, madeira, and Worcestershire. Bring to a boil; cook for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Set gravy aside.

**2** Heat oven to 425°. Whisk remaining flour, mustard, and pepper in a bowl. Whisk in milk and eggs; let rest for 15 minutes. Pour 6 tbsp.

bacon fat into a 9" x 11" baking dish; heat in oven for 10 minutes. Heat remaining bacon fat in a 12" skillet over medium heat. Wrap 1 slice prosciutto around each sausage; place in skillet, and cook until browned all over, about 8 minutes. Pour batter into hot baking dish; arrange sausages in dish, and bake until golden, 25-30 minutes. Serve with gravy.

### Steak and Stilton Pies

SERVES 4

Pungent Stilton cheese and malty stout beer enrich the filling in these meat pies (pictured on page 30).

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 ¼ lb. beef chuck, cut into 1" cubes
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 large yellow onions, sliced
- 2 ribs celery, thickly sliced
- 2 small carrots, thickly sliced
- 2 tbsp. minced rosemary
- 1 12-oz. bottle stout beer
- ¼ cup flour
- 2 cups beef stock
- 2 tsp. mustard powder
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 10 oz. mushrooms, quartered
- 6 oz. English Stilton, crumbled
- 1 10-oz. package frozen peas
- 1 14-oz. package puff pastry
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

**1** Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Season beef with salt and pepper, and cook until browned, 10-12 minutes; transfer to a bowl. Add garlic, onions, celery, carrots, and rosemary to pan; cook until soft, 10-12 minutes. Add beer; cook until almost dry, 18-20 minutes. Add flour; cook, stirring, until smooth. Return beef to pan along with stock, mustard, and bay leaf; bring to a simmer over medium-low heat. Cook, covered partially, until beef is barely tender, about 1½ hours; set aside. Heat butter in a 10" skillet over high heat. Add mushrooms; cook, stirring, until browned all over, about 8 minutes; stir into beef mixture along with cheese and peas.

**2** Heat oven to 375°. Divide beef mixture among four 6" pie tins

(12 oz. each). Roll pastry into a 14" square; cut out four 6" circles. Brush tin edges with egg; place 1 circle over each; press to seal. Cut slits into pastry; brush with egg. Bake until browned, about 40 minutes.



### Bubble and Squeak

SERVES 6-8

This hearty fried vegetable hash (pictured above) includes roasted Brussels sprouts, carrots, and parsnips.

- 8 oz. Brussels sprouts, halved
- 6 medium carrots, chopped
- 3 medium parsnips, chopped
- 6 tbsp. olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 lb. russet potatoes, cubed
- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 3 tbsp. finely chopped chives

**1** Heat oven to 400°. Place Brussels sprouts, carrots, and parsnips on a foil-lined baking sheet; toss with 4 tbsp. oil and salt and pepper. Bake until tender, about 25 minutes; let cool.

**2** Put potatoes in a 4-qt. saucepan; cover with salted water. Bring to a boil; cook until tender, about 20 minutes. Drain potatoes; set aside. Return pan to heat with 2 tbsp. butter; add onion, and cook until soft, 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat; add potatoes, cream, chives, and salt and pepper; mash until smooth, then stir in roasted vegetables.

**3** Heat remaining oil and butter in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add vegetable mixture; cook, flipping once, until browned, 18-20 minutes.





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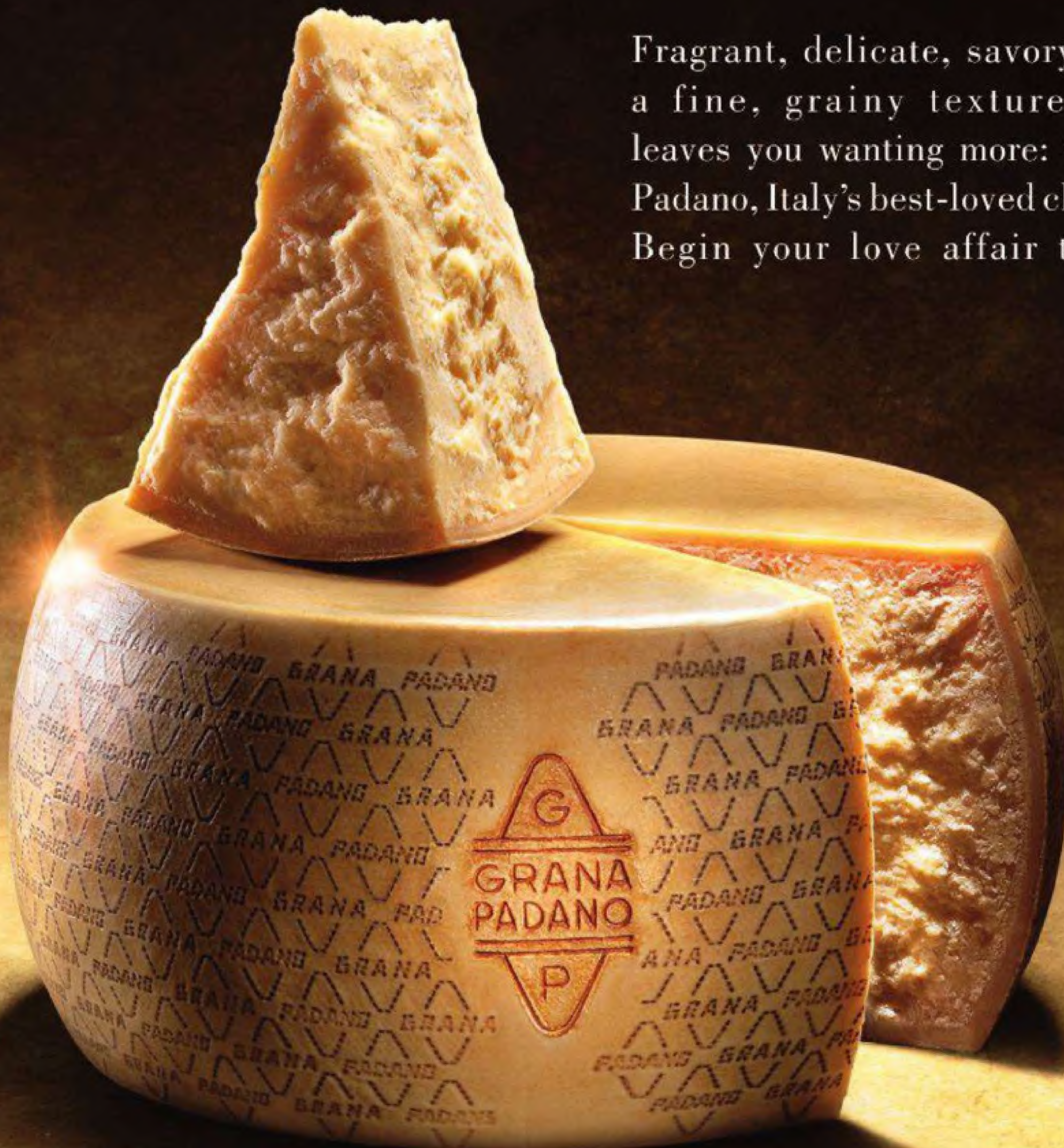


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# DRINK



## Whiskey Rebellion

An American spirit boldly comes of age

BY REBECCA BARRY

**I** STARTED DRINKING WHISKEY (bourbon—no rocks, thank you) in the 1990s. In Upstate New York, where I'm from, there wasn't a lot to choose from: Jim Beam, Jack Daniel's, Maker's Mark. And you drank it straight—there were no whiskey cocktails on the local bar menus. Women were drinking Cosmopolitans and margaritas, and men, if they drank whiskey, were drinking Scotch. I drank Maker's, which I liked for its sweet bite and the softness that came from the wheat used as a flavor grain; I figured that would be it for the rest of my life. ✂ Imagine my delight when, several years later, a friend brought me a bottle of Tuthilltown Spirits' Hudson Baby Bourbon Whiskey, craft-distilled from 100 percent New York corn. Here was something different,

TODD COLEMAN



a small-batch whiskey with a full taste—loads of vanilla and caramel with hints of honey—practically made in my own backyard.

Then, last May, I found myself at Finger Lakes Distilling's Kentucky Derby party, even closer to home. I was drinking a cocktail made with beet juice, apple cider, star anise simple syrup, and rye handcrafted by a third-generation moonshiner from Alabama, who had come to Upstate New York to be Finger Lakes' distiller. The earthy beet juice and sweet cider brought out the apple in the rye. It took just a few sips to realize that I wouldn't be settling for the mass-market stuff much longer.

REBECCA BARRY is the author of *Later, at the Bar: A Novel in Stories* (Simon & Schuster, 2007).

This is what whiskey looks like now. The spirit that fell out of fashion throughout most of the country in the 1970s is seeing a foot-stomping revival, the recipe for which goes like this: Take 300 years of U.S. whiskey-making history and add the creativity of new, small distillers. Mix in the locavore movement, which has instigated a return to traditional technologies and recipes and a desire to create spirits with a regional character; garnish with a revival of specialty cocktails, and cheers: American whiskey has never tasted so good.

It doesn't hurt that a lot of the people now making whiskey are full of character themselves. Take Thomas McKenzie of Finger Lakes Distilling. His grandfathers on both his mother's and father's sides made moonshine in Alabama, and

their grandfathers before them, he told me when I visited him recently. "My granddaddy would sell it in Coke bottles."

McKenzie makes corn whiskey, bourbon, and rye. His bourbon is aged, like all bourbon is by law, in new, charred oak barrels that infuse it with toasty vanilla flavor, but he finishes it in local char-donnay casks, which add mellow hints of tropical fruit. His rich, applelike rye is aged in small oak quarter casks that accentuate its woodiness, and finished in sherry barrels from local wineries, which add sweetness.

In many ways, McKenzie is representative of the entire movement—someone with a personal connection to the drink's history, a predisposition to individualism ("I don't much care for govern-

ment," he told me), a love of local ingredients, and who is making something new and traditional at once. He distills his whiskey "the old-fashioned way," he said, "using barley malt to convert the grain starch to sugar," rather than employing commercial enzymes to break down the starches.

And while it might seem odd to find a New York craft distiller making bourbon—Kentucky's signature corn-based, aged whiskey—in some ways it's exactly where McKenzie should be. Upstate New York, like much of the Northeast, used to be full of small stills—1,129 of them in 1825, according to one contemporary survey. Since widespread commercial refrigeration was still years away, there was an overabundance of local corn, rye, wheat, and



## Tasting Notes

Along with bourbon (corn-based, aged in charred barrels) and rye (made mainly from its namesake grain) are wheat-based and other corn whiskeys, as well as ones made from malted barley.

**Dry Fly Washington Wheat Whiskey** (\$49.95; 750 ml) A subtle mix of honeyed vanilla and savory brine, balanced by delicate wood and wheat. Mint and cold tobacco on a long, complex, food-friendly finish.

**Death's Door White Whisky** (\$34.99; 750 ml) This unaged wheat-based distillate from Wisconsin smells hay-like at first and then reveals fennel aromas, with a creamy palate and pepper and cumin flavors to round it out.

**St. George Single Malt Whiskey** (\$70; 750 ml) Lovely quince and honey aromas pave the way in this California whiskey to an explosion of pineapple and coconut flavors on a base of pine, cedar, and vanilla.

**Hudson Manhattan Rye Whiskey** (\$39; 375 ml) A discreet nose of strawberry-vanilla lollipop leads to aniseed, cherry, chocolate, and ripe peaches. Though the flavor is not as rich, it holds together well.

**McCarthy's Oregon Single Malt** (\$50; 750 ml) Smoky and Scotch-like, this peated whiskey from Clear Creek Distillery has sweet, delicate vanilla undertones, with a well-balanced flavor and a nice, long finish.

**Jefferson's Presidential Select Bourbon** (\$89.99; 750 ml) Marzipan, then grilled pineapple, coconut, and chocolate in this woody bourbon from Louisville's late, legendary Stitzel-Weller Distillery. (continued on page 38)

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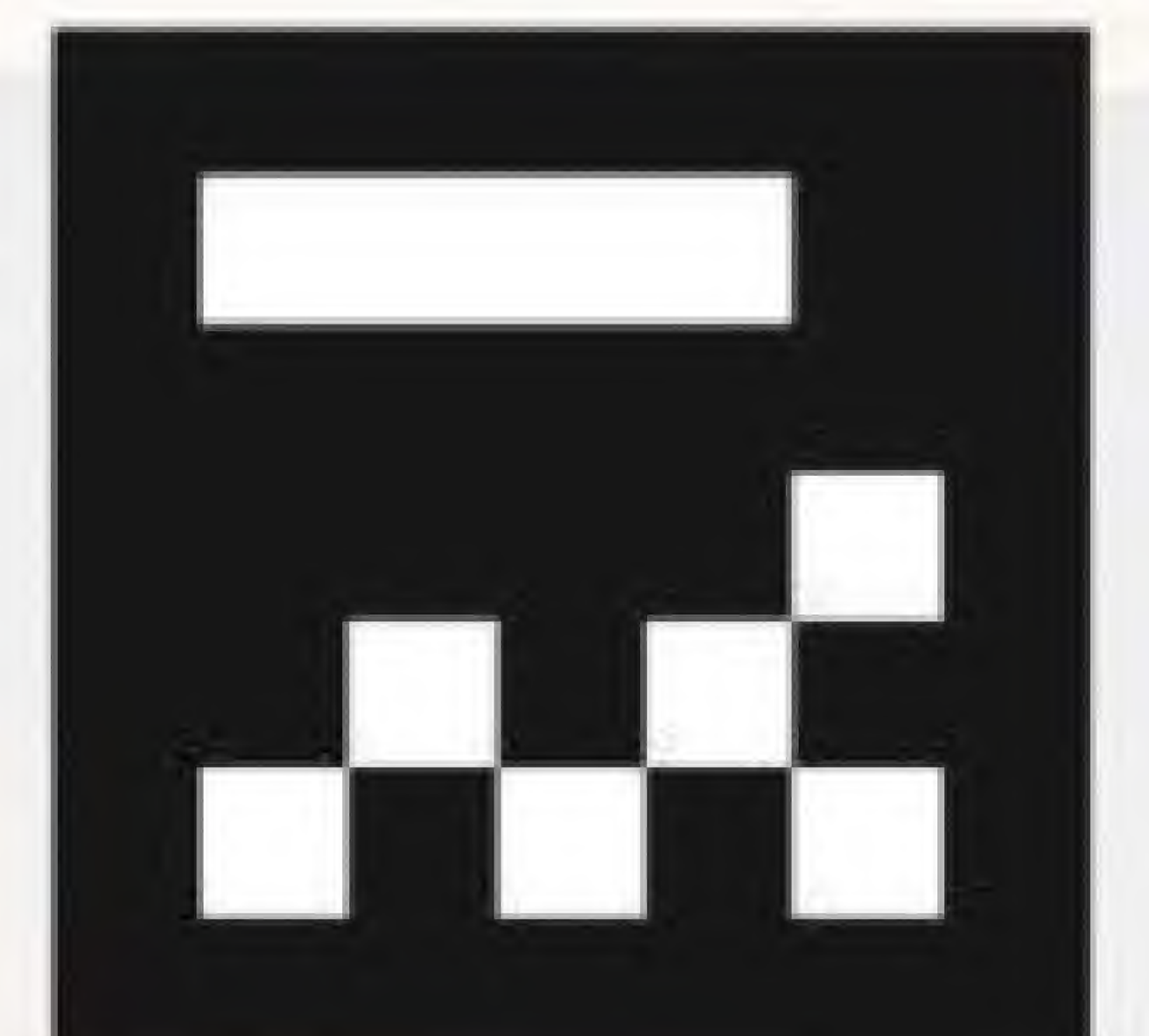


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apples. Farmers found that if they distilled their crops down to spirits and shipped them out on the Erie Canal, they could make their surpluses profitable. You could say that it was because of canals like the Erie, or rivers like the Mississippi, which runs between Kentucky's bourbon country and cities like New Orleans, that whiskey got good back in the day. The time it spent in barrels on the barges aged it, and people noticed the difference.

FINDING OUT about my region's distilling past and tasting some of the incredible whiskeys being produced now made me want to know more; I longed to sample craft whiskeys from other places in the country, and to hear the distillers' stories. So I packed

a bag and flew out to Portland, Oregon, to peek in on the Great American Distillers Festival.

There I met more distillers like Thomas McKenzie, guys with a pioneering passion that evokes the history of a spirit that was first produced stateside in the 1700s by Scottish and Irish pioneers on the Pennsylvania frontier. Those early distillers used rye, which flourished in the Northeast's cool climate. After the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794, many of them moved to Virginia's ungoverned western territory, called Kentucky, to escape taxation. That's where corn—the primary grain in bourbon—flourished.

By the 19th century, whiskey was considered patriotic, as it was made on American soil. People drank it neat, but also in drinks,

**With its mouth-watering creaminess and smoky subtlety, you can enjoy this American whiskey with dinner, like a good wine**

such as the mint julep and, later, bitters-enhanced cocktails like the manhattan (see recipes on page 44). In the 1830s, we were downing 88 bottles per person per year—more than two times what we drink now. You could say we loved whiskey too much, in fact. The problems that ensued from alcohol abuse—lost farms, suffering families—helped give

rise to the temperance movement and, ultimately, Prohibition.

Prohibition changed the American palate—people got used to smuggled Canadian blends and lighter “bathtub” spirits like gin. Over the decades following Prohibition, much of the country's bourbon and rye was bought up by massive companies like Seagram's, ending up mixed with unaged grain alcohol into lighter, less flavorful blended whiskeys. By the mid-1970s, those blends had been eclipsed by an even lighter spirit: vodka.

Nowadays, as I found out in Portland, the darker spirits are hurtling back. The festival buzzed with excitement over new whiskeys, new distillers, and a new energy for traditional methods. Producing those complex spirits,

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**McKenzie Rye Whiskey**  
(\$39; 750 ml)

An initial aroma of fresh apple lapses to green banana and grass. Strong wood flavor and a sweet winelike finish. From Finger Lakes Distilling, this whiskey is great on ice.

**Angel's Envy Bourbon**  
(\$49.99; 750 ml)

Straightforward vanilla and cherry with a hint of smoke and coconut on the nose. In the mouth, it's a peach and mango blast. Round, elegant, and creamy—despite a bit of heat.

**Evan Williams Single Barrel**  
(2001)  
(\$24.99; 750 ml)

Pecan pie and apple over banana and butterscotch on a rich, sweet nose. Great balance with a delicate length; a bourbon for sipping from Heaven Hill Distilleries.

**Parker's Wheated Bourbon**  
(\$79.99; 750 ml)

Wheat, instead of rye, along with the corn makes this cask-strength bourbon soft and sippable; notes of candied orange, white chocolate, mango, and smoke.

**Breuckelen Whiskey**  
(\$39; 750 ml)

Banana and caramel aromas dominate in this wheat whiskey from a new Brooklyn distillery. It tastes of mint and eucalyptus, with a sweet, assertive smokiness.

**Woodstone Creek Single Peated Malt Whiskey**  
(\$118; 750 ml)

Made, like Scotch whisky, from barley malted over smoking peat, this meaty-smelling Cincinnati whiskey opens up to a palate with a hint of wine-cask sweetness.

**Berkshire Bourbon**  
(\$39.99; 750 ml)

Tropical fruit salad: grilled pineapple, mango, guava, vanilla, and banana aromas in this Massachusetts bourbon. Assertive herbal, citrus, and spice flavors.

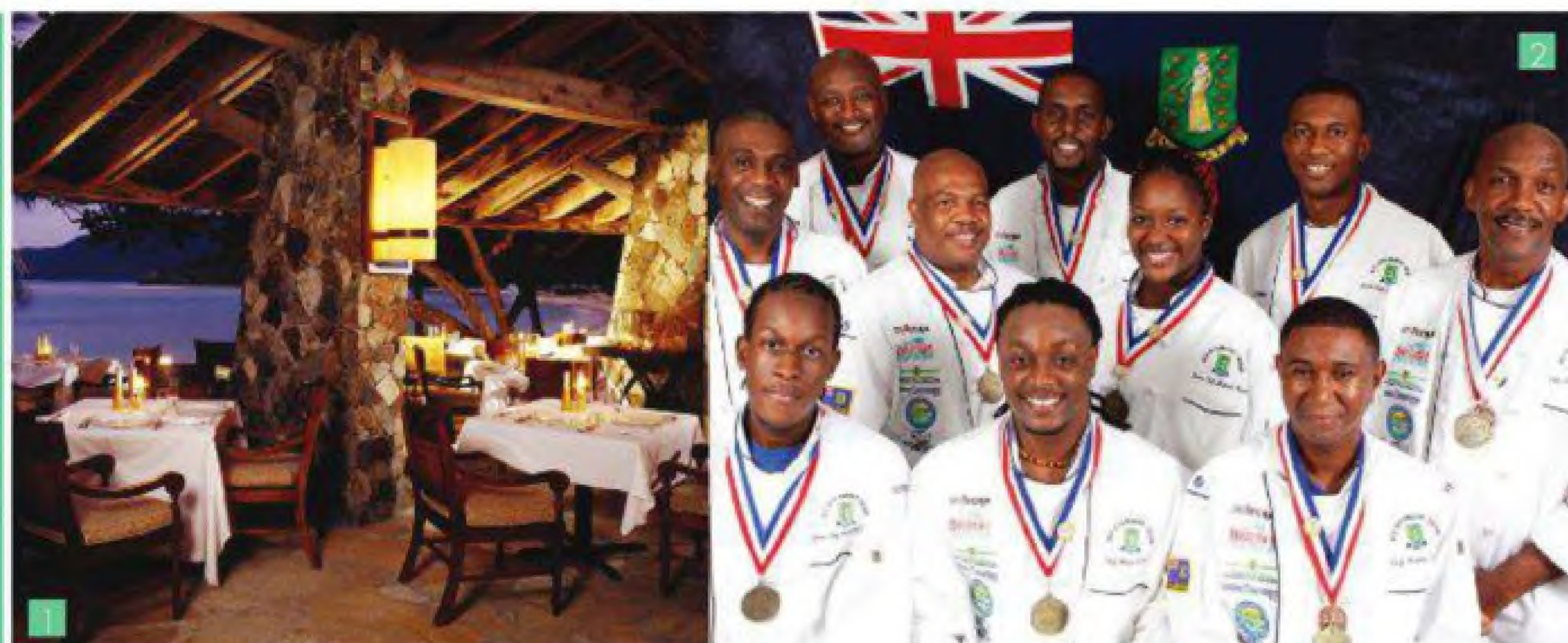
(continued on page 40)

TODD COLEMAN



# BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

## Explore Our Delightful Culinary Secrets



YOU COULD GO to Burgundy for great wine. Or to Piedmont, or the Mosel... Or, this November, you could skip the ice and snow, heading instead to the white sand beaches of the [British Virgin Islands](#). Here, the BVI star chefs are teaming up with celebrity chefs as well as with winemakers from the best wine regions to host the fourth annual Virgin Islands Winemakers Dinners.

These gastronomic events have brought together first-class food and phenomenal wine from around the world. It is one of the few events where award-winning, dedicated, passionate winemakers come together to share their favorite wines with the guests of the BVI over five course dinners that include various courses, each prepared and presented by a different chef.

This year's dinners will be held between November 16 and 20. [Chef Mathayom Vacharat](#) of St. John, US Virgin Islands, has been named the 2011 Executive Chef. He'll be joined by [Chef Stephen Stryjewski](#), James Beard Award winner for Best Chef: South, [Chef Roberto Trevino](#), a participant in Food Network's Iron Chef America, and [Chef Julio Lazzarini](#), Chef and Owner of Vinoteca 902 and Orillas Tapas Bar. Each course will also be paired with different fine wines selected by the winemakers who will be in attendance. This year's winemakers include [Michael DeLoach](#) of Hook and Ladder Winery, Russian River, California, [Regina Martinelli](#) of Martinelli Vineyards, [Philippe Marchal](#) of Louis Jadot, France, [Jim Bernau](#) of Willamette Valley Vineyards, Oregon, and [Gonzalo Lainez](#), of RODA, La Rioja Spain. The dinners will be held at iconic resort and villa locations throughout the BVI. As if great food and wine weren't enough of a draw, proceeds from these exclusive dinners will go towards charitable organizations in the BVI that support local youth. For more information and advance ticket purchase, visit [winemakersdinners.com](#).

And winemakers dinners are only the latest evidence of the BVI as a culinary destination. This June, a team of the BVI chefs took home the gold medal in the 2011 [Caribbean Culinary Competition](#), where teams of chefs from 10 Caribbean countries and territories engaged in "live kitchen" competitions. Their gold medal win demonstrates the high level of cuisine that can be experienced daily in the BVI's many fine dining establishments.

1. The Sugar Mill at Rosewood Little Dix Bay was host to one of the Winemakers Dinners in 2010

2. The British Virgin Islands National Culinary Team won five gold medals at this year's annual Taste of the Caribbean Culinary Competition

### British Virgin Islands Doved/Daubed Pork

serves 4-6

pork:

- 2 lbs. pork cut into cubes with or without bones
- 2 cups medium diced onion
- 2 cups medium diced celery
- 2 cups medium diced peppers
- 1 cup medium red peppers
- ½ cup diced hot peppers
- ½ cup chopped fresh thyme
- ½ cup chopped fresh garlic
- 4 oz. tomato sauce
- 2-3 oz. vegetable oil
- 4-5 cups water
- salt and pepper, to taste

native seasoning:

- 1 cup rock/sea salt, grounded
- 4 tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. cloves
- 1 sprig celery
- 1 sprig parsley
- 1 tsp. mace
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- 5 cloves garlic

method:

To make the native seasoning, combine all ingredients by putting them in a mortar and mash with a pestle until they are mixed well, then set aside.

Place a large frying pan on the stove. Add oil until the pot gets very hot, then add the pork and stir until brown. Remove all the oil from the pan then add garlic and native seasoning. Next add 4-5 cups water. Finally, add all the other ingredients and simmer until the pork is tender.

Recommended to serve with rice, vegetables and fried plantain.

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said Chip Tate of Texas' Balcones Distillery, handing me a taste of his grassy Baby Blue corn whiskey, "is like impromptu poetry."

The poetry is in the choices distillers make that affect flavor. All whiskey starts the same way, with a mash of grain, yeast, and water. For rye, the mash is at least 51 percent rye, a spicy grain; for bourbon, it's the same percentage of corn, while corn whiskey contains 80 percent or more of that sweet grain. There are also wheat whiskeys, which tend to be soft and round, and smokey ones made from malted barley. The remaining grains in any mash bill, or recipe—rye, corn, barley, wheat, oats—add their own personalities, and craft distillers have been experimenting with recipes.

The mash is heated in a still, which releases an alcoholic vapor that's captured to make the spirit. Industrial producers use a continuous still that mechanically monitors temperature and proof, and removes congeners, impurities produced during fermentation. Yet it's these congeners that give the spirit much of its character. Distillers like McKenzie and Tate have gone back to using the less-mechanized copper pot still (or a hybrid version of it), which allows them to rely on their own senses to modulate flavors and aromas.

You can smell the difference, for instance, in a pour of High West's Double Rye!, a rye, corn, and malted barley whiskey made in Park City, Utah. There's peach, banana, and gooseberry jam on the

nose—all from the esters left in the spirit after pot distilling. You can taste it in the peppery, minty bite of the all-rye spirit from the Bowling Green, Kentucky, micro-distillery Corsair. The character of the mash bill shines through.

Once whiskey is distilled, it's barreled. Depending on how long it ages, its storage temperature and humidity, and the char and volume of the barrel, the whiskey picks up flavors, from floral and fruity to smoky and butterscotch. Every barrel is unique (see "Born in the Barrel," page 42). Industrial distillers, historically, have blended many barrels to attain consistency. The new craft distillers are experimenting with small-batch, single-barrel (a spirit not mixed with that from other casks), re-

barreled (in used bourbon or wine casks), and even artisanally blended whiskeys (made with premium bourbon and rye, unadulterated by neutral spirits). Each of these whiskeys is defined by its uniqueness—and sometimes its potency. Whereas water is added to most whiskey before bottling to lessen the intensity of the alcohol, some of the newer ones are bottled at full barrel strength.

The results are thrilling for a whiskey lover like me: Never in the history of the spirit has there been such an exciting range of styles and flavors. Vibrant, spicy ryes; rich, chocolatey bourbons; edgy, sweet corn whiskeys and mellow wheat ones; Scotchlike single malts with their American-style wood. These are brazen, complex,



**Edgefield's Hogshead Whiskey** (\$32.50; 750 ml)  
A port-wine nose and a sweet, smoky palate with notes of cherrywood and vanilla. A Scotch-on-steroids benchmark for American single malts.

**Prichard's Double Barreled Bourbon** (\$72; 750 ml)  
A perfect bourbon: Barreled twice in charred oak, it's rich but not overwhelming; a rare balance of chocolate, vanilla, clove, and coconut aromas and flavors.

**Corsair Artisan Distillery 100% Rye** (\$45; 750 ml)  
A fragrant, exotic fruit punch of a Kentucky whiskey that brings lemon, mango, pineapple, banana, and mint to the nose, with a flavor that's round and candy-like but balanced.

**High West Bourye** (\$65.99; 750 ml)  
At first tight and hot, this blend develops luscious aromas: bergamot, blackberry, vanilla, coconut, cloves. A ryelike start in the mouth, followed by rich bourbon characteristics.

**Four Roses Small Batch** (\$29.99; 750 ml)  
From a big, 123-year-old Kentucky distillery, this lovely, flowery, fruity bourbon shows almost like a great white wine from Burgundy, with a round and velvety palate.

**Balcones Brimstone Corn Whiskey** (\$53; 750 ml)  
Gunpowder meets barbecue, an explosive recipe for this powerful, yet well-balanced blue corn whiskey from Texas. It's delicious with a couple of ice cubes added, too.

**Copper Fox Rye Whisky** (\$45; 750 ml)  
Apple and pear, then cherry and peach aromas. This one-third malted barley spirit from Virginia tastes first of sweet vanilla, but smoky, spicy rye takes over.  
—Flavien Desoblin



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## BORN IN THE BARREL

### Char

Most barrels—particularly those used for bourbon—are set on fire inside for anywhere from 15 seconds to a few minutes. The resulting interior char contributes additional color and toasty notes, and works like a charcoal filter, drawing impurities out of the spirit. It browns the wood's sugars, producing a caramelized flavor, and helps release vanillin from lignin (a cellulose-binding compound found in wood).

### Construction

The smaller the barrel, the more spirit is exposed to wood; the whiskey takes on characteristics of the wood more quickly. In a larger barrel, whiskey ages more slowly and, some argue, more completely, thereby preventing woody qualities from overwhelming it. It matters, too, what part of the tree the staves come from. Those from the bottom half impart deeper color and richer caramel flavors.

### History

By federal law, bourbon must be aged in new, charred oak barrels. Scotch-style American single malt whiskeys are often aged in used bourbon barrels, which imbue the spirit with some of the character of the barrel's original contents. Some craft distillers finish their whiskeys in used wine or sherry casks, too, which add their own flavors to the finished spirit.

### Time

Over time, the porous barrels allow oxygen to penetrate and some of the whiskey to evaporate (known as the angel's share), concentrating flavors and potency. Warehousing of barrels is an art: Whiskey stored at the top of the building, where temperatures are highest, matures the fastest. Each distiller has its own method for rotating barrels through the warehouse for even aging.

### Wood

Some say more than 60 percent of a whiskey's flavor comes from the barrel. The spirit draws color, as well as sugars from the wood. American white oak (shown here)—the wood often used for whiskey barrels—contains other flavor-imparting compounds: Vanillin lends a vanilla flavor; amyl acetate, a fruity one. It is also high in coconut-flavored lactones, as well as mouth-gripping tannins. —Beth Kracklauer

and highly enjoyable spirits. Even bigger outfits like Jim Beam and Jack Daniel's are starting to bottle their own artisanal whiskeys made from exceptional barrels that have sat aging in their vast warehouses.

BACK WHEN I started drinking whiskey, U.S. craft distilleries—those making fewer than 65,000 annual proof gallons (measured in gallons of 50 percent alcohol), as opposed to, say, Jim Beam's tens of millions of proof gallons—were unheard of; now there are more than 300. One aide to this growth is a loosening, finally, of post-Prohibition state laws. Washington State's Craft Distiller's Bill, for example, lobbied for by Kent Fleischmann of Spokane's Dry Fly Distilling, allows distillers to have tasting rooms where they can circumvent expensive distributors and sell their spirits directly to visitors, like wineries do. "It was about agriculture," says Fleischmann of the bill. "It allowed craft distillers to sell out of their distilleries providing they use at least 51 percent ingredients indigenous to the state."

Dry Fly is one of the few distilleries making a 100 percent wheat whiskey—with Washington State wheat. With its mouthwatering creaminess and smoky subtlety, you can enjoy it with dinner, like a good wine—one that expresses the *terroir* of where it was made and its ingredients were grown.

Similarly, Balcones' Chip Tate makes his whiskeys using blue corn, a grain distinctly of the American West. Like other new whiskeys, his spirits represent a return to tradition and to the land, as well as a maverick departure from the status quo. Taking a cue from Scottish whiskey, which is traditionally made with barley malt dried over smoking peat moss, Tate makes his Brimstone whiskey by smoking not the grain, but the spirit itself, over native scrub oak; Brimstone screams of bacon and burning brush. Like others of the new spirits, it's a delicious experiment, one that whiskey drinkers can really raise a glass to. 🐾

TODD COLEMAN





Tempting  
your Taste





MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

Julian Cox of Los Angeles's Rivera created this fresh, bright cocktail.

- 1½ oz. bourbon, such as Hudson Baby Bourbon
- ¾ oz. cane syrup
- ½ oz. fresh lime juice
- ½ oz. fresh or bottled beet juice
- ¼ oz. Esprit de June liqueur
- ¼ tsp. cayenne
- 4 slices red bell pepper

Mix bourbon, syrup, juices, liqueur, and cayenne in a shaker with ice; shake to chill. Strain into a rocks glass with ice; garnish with peppers.

**Bourbon Cider**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

Perfect for fall, this recipe comes from Jennifer Pittman of Louisville, Kentucky's Proof on Main.

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tbsp. whole cloves, crushed
- 1 3" piece fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 oz. apple cider
- 1½ oz. bourbon
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- Dried apple slice, to garnish

**1** Boil 1 cup water in a small saucepan. Remove from heat; stir in sugar, cloves, ginger, and cinnamon; let sit for 1 hour. Strain and chill syrup.

**2** Mix ¾ oz. ginger syrup, cider, bourbon, and juice in a shaker with ice; shake to chill. Strain into a martini glass; garnish with apple.

**Brown Derby**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

Named for the famous hat-shaped restaurant, this was the signature drink at LA's 1930s Vendome Club.

- 1 oz. bourbon
- 1 oz. fresh grapefruit juice
- 1½ tsp. honey mixed with 1½ tsp. warm water

Mix bourbon, juice, and honey mixture in a shaker with ice; shake to chill. Strain into champagne coupe.

**Greenpoint**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

Michael McIlroy of New York's Milk & Honey named this aromatic drink after the Brooklyn neighborhood.

- 2 oz. rye whiskey
- 1 oz. Punt e Mes vermouth
- 1 tsp. yellow Chartreuse
- 1 dash Angostura bitters

Mix whiskey, vermouth, Chartreuse, and bitters in a shaker with ice; stir to chill. Strain into champagne coupe.

**Hot Coconut Milk Punch**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

Coconut milk adds richness to this drink, adapted from a recipe by mixologist and writer Toby Cecchini.

- ¾ cup milk
- ¼ cup coconut milk
- 1 tbsp. light brown sugar
- 1½ tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 oz. bourbon, like Pritchard's
- Grated nutmeg, to garnish

Heat milks, sugar, and vanilla in a small saucepan over high heat; cook, whisking, until frothy and steaming. Stir in bourbon, then pour into a coffee mug; garnish with nutmeg.

**La La Lola**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

Jill Schulster of Manhattan's Joe-Doe restaurant created this riff on a cherry cola.

- 1 pint cherries, pitted
- 2 oz. rye whiskey
- 3 cups cola
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice

**1** Combine cherries, 1 oz. rye, and 1 cup cola in a bowl; cover and chill. Let remaining cola flatten, then freeze in ice cube trays.

**2** Place 5 cherries and 1 tsp. rye-cola

mixture in a double rocks glass; muddle cherries. Mix remaining whiskey and juice in a shaker with ice; shake to chill. Strain into glass with cherries; add 4 or 5 cola ice cubes.

**Manhattan**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

In the early 1800s, "cocktail" connoted a drink mixed with bitters. The recipe for this one comes from Keen's Steakhouse in Manhattan.

- 3 oz. rye whiskey
- 1 oz. sweet vermouth
- 3 dashes Angostura bitters
- 1 maraschino cherry

Mix whiskey, vermouth, and bitters in a shaker with ice; stir to chill. Strain into a martini glass, or a rocks glass with ice; garnish with cherry.

**Mint Julep**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

One of the first mixed drinks, the mint-laden julep was popularized on 18th-century Southern plantations.

- ¾ oz. simple syrup
- 10 mint leaves, plus a sprig
- 3 oz. bourbon, such as Angel's Envy

Muddle syrup and mint leaves in a julep glass. Fill halfway with crushed ice; add bourbon. Stir to chill; fill with more ice. Garnish with sprig.

**Sazerac**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

This anise-scented libation was devised at New Orleans' Sazerac Coffee House in the mid-1800s.

- ½ tsp. sugar
- 2 oz. rye, such as Corsair
- 2 dashes Peychaud's bitters
- 1 lemon peel twist
- 8 drops Herbsaint liqueur

Dissolve sugar in 1 tsp. water in a shaker; fill with ice. Add rye, bitters, and peel; stir to chill. Swirl Herbsaint in a rocks glass; discard. Strain

rye mixture into glass. Serve alongside ice water.

**Seelbach**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

The eponymous Louisville hotel has been serving this drink since 1917.

- 1½ oz. bourbon, like Berkshire
- ½ oz. Cointreau
- 3 dashes Angostura bitters
- 3 dashes Peychaud's bitters
- Champagne, to fill glass
- Orange peel twist, to garnish

Mix bourbon, Cointreau, and both bitters in a shaker with ice; stir to chill. Strain into a flute. Fill with champagne; garnish with twist.

**Whiskey Sour**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

Dale DeGroff's *The Essential Cocktail: The Art of Mixing the Perfect Drink* (Clarkson Potter, 2008) was the source for this timeless recipe.

- 1½ oz. bourbon
- 1 oz. simple syrup
- ¾ oz. fresh lemon juice
- ¼ oz. egg white
- 1 maraschino cherry
- Orange slice, to garnish

Mix bourbon, syrup, juice, and egg white in a shaker with ice; shake to chill. Strain into a rocks glass with ice; garnish with cherry and orange.

**White Whiskey Punch**

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

White whiskey, the clear, unaged spirit, stars in this potent punch.

- 2 oz. white whiskey, such as Death's Door
- 2 oz. fresh pineapple juice
- 1 oz. fresh lime juice
- 1 oz. simple syrup
- Pineapple wedge, for garnish

Mix whiskey, juices, and syrup in a shaker with ice; shake to chill. Strain into a rocks glass with ice; garnish with pineapple.

Whiskey cocktails, from left: bourbon cider, mint julep, hot coconut milk punch, the la la lola, the sazerac, white whiskey punch, beet it, the Greenpoint, the Brown Derby, the Seelbach, and the whiskey sour.





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## Squash & Cheddar Gratin

MAKES 8 SERVINGS

- 6 ounces Seriously Sharp Cheddar, grated (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1 1/2 cups fresh bread crumbs (about 3 slices firm white bread)
- 2 tablespoons salted butter
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, crumbled
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 pounds dry-fleshed winter squash, such as Buttercup, Hubbard or Kabocha, peeled and seeded
- 3/4-1 cup chicken broth

- ① Preheat oven to 375°F. Combine cheese and bread crumbs in bowl and set aside.
- ② In large skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add onions and sugar. Stir often until onions are golden, about 10 minutes. Stir in salt, thyme and pepper, then transfer mixture to 1 1/2-quart baking dish.
- ③ Cut squash into smaller chunks and cut these chunks into 1/8-inch-thick slices. Add to onions and stir together well.
- ④ Pour 3/4 cup of chicken broth evenly over squash. Cover dish tightly with lid or foil and bake for about 70 minutes, or until squash is tender and broth is nearly all absorbed. If squash appears dry, add remaining 1/4 cup broth.
- ⑤ Sprinkle squash with reserved bread crumb mixture. Bake until topping is golden, about 20 minutes longer.

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# MEMORIES



## The Boys' Club

Thursday dinners at a hunting and fishing camp in North Carolina

BY HUNTER LEWIS PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD COLEMAN

**W**HEN I ARRIVE AT SENIARD Creek Farm for dinner, things are just as I remember them: Rhododendron bushes still line the rutted gravel road; the old log cabin is warmed by a fire in the stone hearth; and there are a bunch of gray-haired men in the living room, drinking whiskey and practicing the high art of BS. I've made the trip to this hunting and fishing club in western North Carolina from my home in New York City as a guest of my grandfather, John Erichson. I call him Pop, and at 95, he's the oldest of the club's 30 members.

It's a Thursday in October, the one day each week when Pop and his buddies gather together to fish, eat, and play cards. On the bar, there's a platter of wild-boar sausage and smoked pork tenderloin, which

the men snack on as they banter about the off-field struggles of the Tar Heels football team, the cold weather approaching, deer season. It's been a year since my last visit to Seniard Creek, and the old men quiz me about my new apartment, my recent wedding, my job.

Out back, the kitchen is warm and cozy with Clarence Bratton's cooking. Clarence, a 77-year-old retired cook from the local hospital, has been preparing these Thursday-night meals for as long as anybody can remember—so long that he's as much a member of the club as anyone else. Pop, his white hair still thick but his back slightly bent, warms himself by the wood-burning stove where Clarence is stewing okra and tomatoes and simmering bacon-studded collard greens. He seasons two whole beef tenderloins with chopped garlic, black pepper, and rosemary sprigs. Cast-iron skillet of corn bread and

roasting pans of quartered new potatoes go into the oven. I watch Clarence divine each dish's doneness with a tap on the rims of the battered pots. "Well, let's see what we got now," he says to himself, going down his mental checklist for the menu.

The smell of seared beef summons folks to the kitchen's long picnic tables, which are covered with red-checked plastic tablecloths. Out come platters of juicy, rare beef; wedges of corn bread to be slathered with honey; and supermarket bottles of cabernet sauvignon and merlot. A request goes out from a friend of Pops: "Hey, Pearce, can you pass the goddamn Chateau Who Knows?"

All over the South, similar rituals still unfold in old-fashioned clubs like this one—places where young guys like me dis-

HUNTER LEWIS, a former test kitchen director at *SAVEUR*, is the food editor of *Bon Appétit*.

Pearce Weaver holds a rainbow trout caught at Seniard Lake near Mills River, North Carolina.





Clockwise, from left: Rosemary-rubbed beef tenderloin (see page 50 for a recipe); the author's grandfather, John Erichson; members of Seniard Creek Farm's hunting and fishing club at the table for one of their Thursday-night dinners.

cover what it means to be men over fishing poles, gunsights, and big, raucous meals with their fathers and grandfathers. Long before I became a professional cook—and a city boy—I learned the ways of the world up here. Coming back reminds me of the lessons I soaked up at my grandfather's side.

I was 16 when I was deemed old enough to dine at this table. I no longer try to remember every joke told, but I've learned the three prevailing rules of the meal: Don't ask for a glass of white wine, don't make the mistake of wearing tasseled loafers, and if you're a lawyer who is wearing tasseled loafers, chances are the doctors are already giving you hell.

Many of the first members of this club were doctors; it was their sons' generation that voted Pop in after he retired from running the Gerber baby-food plant in Asheville, in 1983. In fact, there are so many doctors sitting at this table tonight, including Pop's internist, Miles Elmore, that I realize the old man is safer up here than he is back home alone.

Clarence's cooking is as good as I remember it: The tenderloin is rosy pink and shot through with the flavor of the herbs; the

corn bread is moist thanks to the addition of canned corn. Before long the table is cleared and plates of homemade blackberry-peach pie are passed. Coffee is poured from the metal percolator. The men move into the front room to play a card game—a glorified version of Old Maid—called F--- Your Buddy. We each ante up \$1. Cigars are lit, the jokes get dirtier, and the laughter gets louder.



EARLIER THAT AFTERNOON, I fished Seniard Lake with my grandfather. I treated it like the day I was married, slowing down time, savoring the details. I helped Pop into the aluminum, flat-bottom boat, the same one we used to navigate this lake when I was a kid, and paddled out to where the fish were rising.

Fishing has always been central to the Seniard Creek ritual: I can still remember

the feeling of excitement as I helped Pop pack the back of his car just so with the blue Igloo cooler, the fishing vests, the fly rods, and a bag full of sandwiches that my grandmother, Mom Pat, had made for us to eat while we fished. We'd often pick up Seniard Creek members Irby Stephens, Joe Hunter, and Mickey McGuire—the hearing-aid patrol, Pop called them—for the 45-minute drive from their homes in Asheville to the camp in remote Henderson County.

It was Pop who taught me how to cast a line: elbow in, snap your wrist. I learned to keep my fly line taut and straight on the water. "When the trout takes the fly, set the hook!" he would always say. Pop showed me how to use the deer-hair caddis flies that his friend Dr. Stephens would tie by hand and give to me every Christmas. He always handled the trout with care, holding them with a surgical towel dipped in lake water so as not to damage them upon release.

My dad left my mom when I was 12, and Pop took me under his wing more than ever during that long, angry summer. We fished our way to an unspoken bond and caught a boatload of trout in the process. Recently, I thanked him for filling that void.



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*Pop* “Did you do it consciously?” I asked him.

“I don’t think it was about being a teacher or a dad,” he said. “You were my companion.”

When I got older, I adapted Pop’s still-water lessons to my other fishing spots, like the fast-moving rivers of Idaho and the salt-water flats of the Bahamas. Whenever I caught myself fiddling with my gear, or untying kinks in my line, I’d hear a familiar refrain: “You’ll never catch a fish without your line in the water, Hunter.” And after a good cast, I’d hear that same voice: “Attaboy.”

IT’S PAST 11 P.M., AND the last card game is over. I clean the fish Pop caught earlier in the day, pack it away in the blue Igloo cooler, and walk out to the porch while the men clean up and gather their things. For the first time, I notice the brass plaques on the rocking chairs memorializing departed club members, including Pop’s old car pool buddies Hunter, McGuire, and Stephens.

## I learned the ways of the world up here. Coming back reminds me of the lessons I soaked up at my grandfather’s side

I ate one of my last dinners with my grandmother on this porch. Women aren’t invited to the Thursday-night meals, but Mom Pat would come up on the weekends to join Pop and me from time to time. The night of that meal, my wife, Ellen, and I ate steaks and talked and drank wine with my grandparents until well after midnight—a Seniard Creek double date. It was Mom Pat who used to greet Pop and me back in Asheville when we returned from our fishing trips, waiting to look at the trout we’d caught. She’d make breakfasts of scrambled eggs cooked with tender pieces of the fish that Pop had smoked over smoldering fruitwood on the grill. She’d bake the fish whole, sometimes stuffed with lemon and herbs, and sometimes cooked plain on brown paper bags, which gave the fish a toasty flavor.

The moths dance in the porch lights as we say our good-byes to Clarence and the other stragglers. I ease the truck down the rutted road, and my mind wanders back to those brass plaques on the rocking chairs. My grandfather watches the road for deer from the passenger seat. “Hang on, old man,” I think. “Hang on.” 🐾

## Rosemary-Rubbed Beef Tenderloin

SERVES 4

Seasoned with fresh rosemary and garlic, this juicy beef tenderloin (pictured on page 48) is the perfect main dish to serve to big groups; any leftovers can be used in sandwiches the day after. For step-by-step instructions on tying a whole beef tenderloin to ensure even cooking, see “All Tied Up,” page 102.

- 1 2-lb. beef tenderloin, trimmed of sinew and excess fat, and tied with kitchen twine
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 3 tbsp. finely chopped rosemary
- 3 large cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter

**1** Place beef tenderloin on a sheet of aluminum foil, and rub all over with 2 tbsp. oil, the rosemary, and the garlic. Season the tenderloin generously with salt and pepper, and then let the beef sit at room temperature for 1 hour, to allow the seasonings to penetrate the meat and form a flavorful crust on the exterior of the roast. (This resting period also takes the chill off the meat, which allows it to cook more evenly in the oven.)

**2** Heat oven to 425°. Heat the remaining oil and the butter in a 12” skillet over medium-high heat. Carefully add the tenderloin to the skillet and cook, turning as needed until the beef is browned on all sides, about 7 minutes.

**3** Transfer the skillet to the oven, and cook the tenderloin until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the beef reads 125° for medium-rare.

**4** Remove the tenderloin from the oven and let it rest for 20 minutes. (During this resting period, the tenderloin will continue to rise in temperature to produce a perfect medium-rare interior, and the tenderloin’s juices will have enough time to distribute evenly throughout the meat.)

**5** When you’re ready to serve the tenderloin, remove the twine, and use a long slicing knife to cut the beef into ½”-thick slices. Transfer slices to a large serving platter, and pour any accumulated juices from the cutting board over the meat to moisten it. Serve immediately or at room temperature with roasted potatoes and a green salad, if you like.

## Roasted Potatoes

SERVES 6–8

Seniard Creek cook Clarence Bratton’s method for roasted potatoes, which calls for cooking them at a high temperature, turns them golden brown on the outside and creamy within.

- 2 lb. small new potatoes, scrubbed clean, dried thoroughly with paper towels, and quartered lengthwise
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Heat oven to 425°. Place the potatoes on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet, and toss with the oil. Season the potatoes generously with salt and pepper, and place them in the oven. Bake potatoes, tossing occasionally with tongs, until they are golden brown and crusty and can be easily pierced with the blade of a knife, about 20 to 25 minutes. Remove potatoes from the oven, and transfer them to a large serving bowl or platter. Season potatoes with more salt and pepper before serving.

## Roasted Rainbow Trout With Lemon and Thyme

SERVES 4

Tying the fish with kitchen twine keeps the aromatics inside the cavity and ensures that the flesh is evenly cooked.

- 1 2-lb. whole rainbow trout or red snapper, scaled, gutted, and cleaned
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 sprigs thyme
- 2 sprigs flat-leaf parsley
- ½ lemon, sliced into thin rounds
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

**1** Heat oven to 450°. Season the trout cavity with salt and pepper, and stuff it with the thyme, parsley, and lemon slices. Using kitchen twine, tie the trout crosswise with 2 lengths of twine, spacing them 2” apart. Rub the trout with 1 tbsp. oil, and then transfer them to an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet. Bake trout, turning once with a metal spatula, until cooked through and golden brown on the outside, about 15 minutes.

**2** Meanwhile, whisk the remaining oil with the juice in a small bowl, and season with salt and pepper. Remove the twine from the trout, and cut away the filets. Transfer the filets to serving plates, and drizzle with sauce before serving.



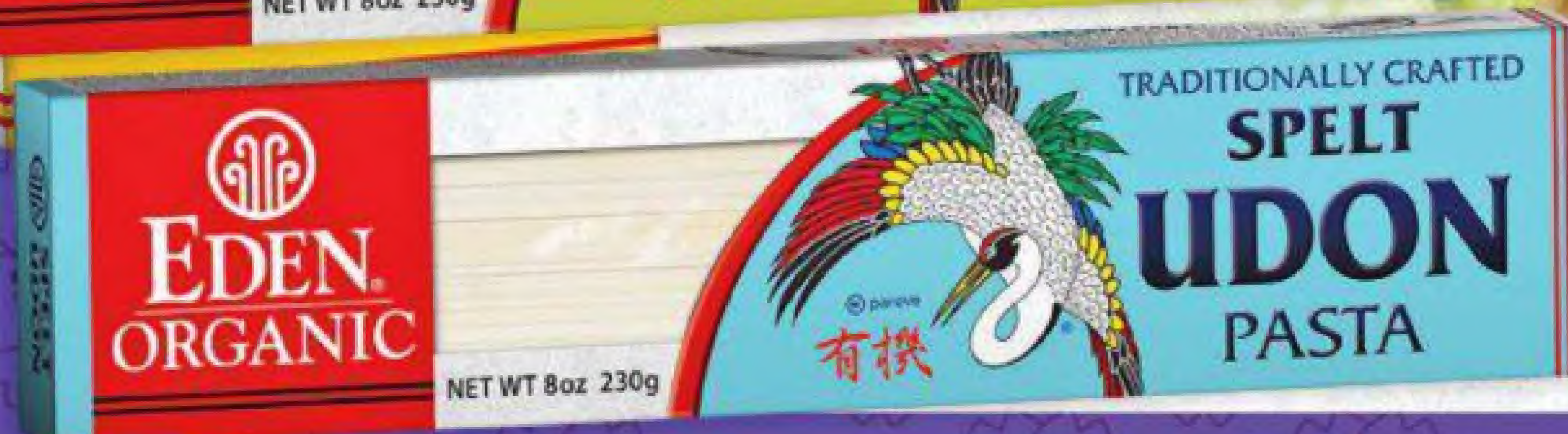
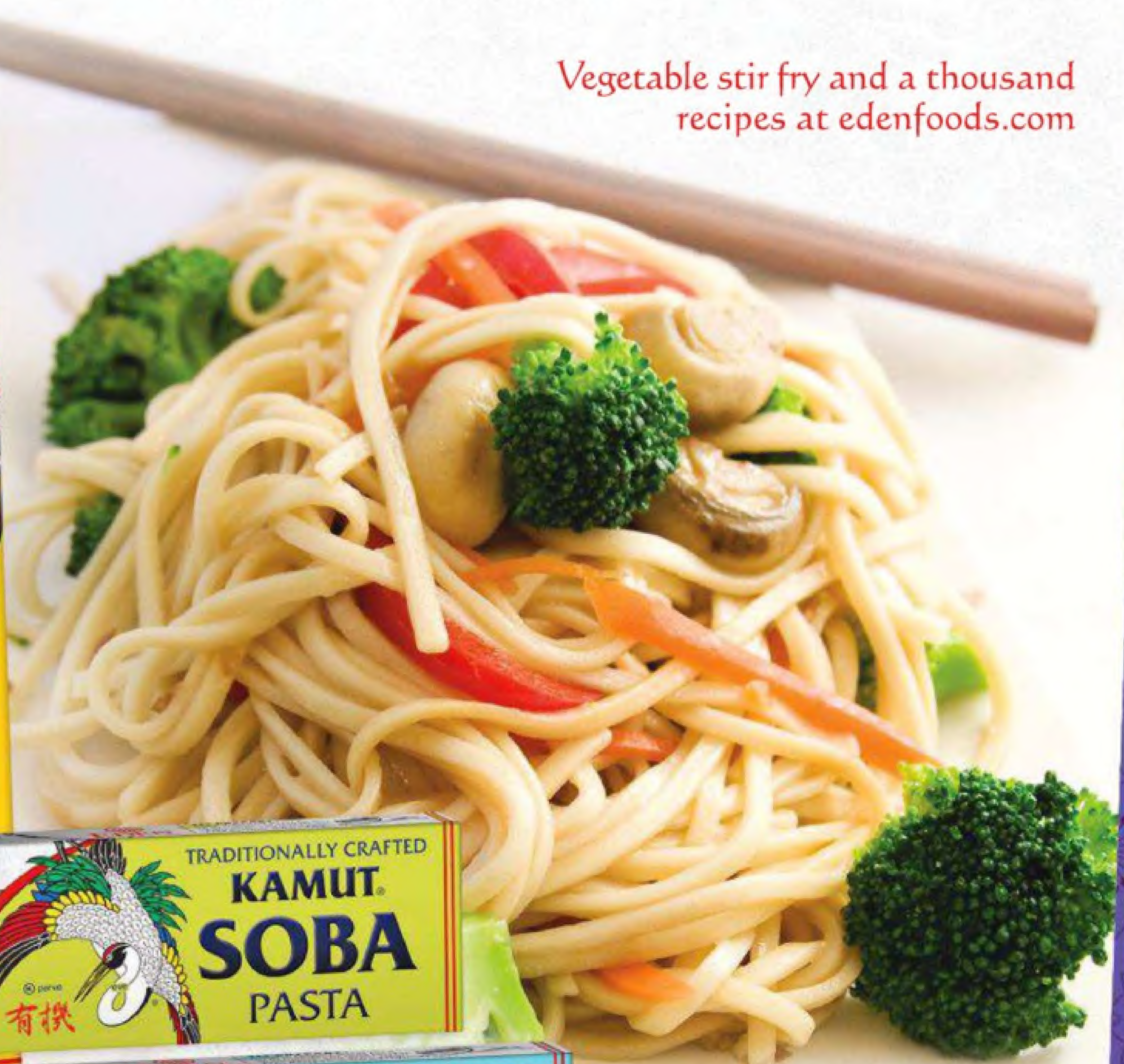
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A photograph of two whole fish, likely sea bream, grilled and served on a large green banana leaf. The fish are covered in a dark, charred, and spicy-looking marinade. A wedge of lime is placed between the two fish. The entire dish is set against a vibrant red background.

# Hungry City

**Gingery dumplings. Coconut milk curries. Spicy noodle stir-fries. The city of Ipoh, Malaysia is a vibrant melting pot of Asian cuisines**

By Jayanthi Daniel Photography by David Hagerman



**A**RE YOU HUNGRY?" my uncle Taru asked when he picked me up from the bus station in Ipoh. I collapsed into the passenger seat of his car and confessed that I was famished: It had been a long journey from my home in New York to my mother's native city a couple of hours north of Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. And, besides, I said, eating is the main goal of this trip.

It had been 20 years since I last saw my uncle, and he was exactly as I remembered him: friendly, fun, young at heart despite his 54 years. A high school history teacher, he's one of the last of my mother's siblings remaining in Ipoh; the others have migrated to the capital or out of the country over the years, like my mom did in the early 1970s. As we drove into downtown, past the palm oil trees that line the road, Ipoh seemed much more modest than a city of 750,000 people; the low-slung buildings and narrow streets gave it a small-town feel. We pulled up next to a ven-

## There were rich curries and also dishes like *char kuey teow*, a stir-fry of tender rice noodles, shrimp, and bean sprouts

dor pushing a wooden cart selling *ais kacang*, a delicious treat of sweetened shaved ice that is my mother's favorite thing in the world. The vendor piled a fluffy mound of the ice in a bowl, drenched it with brightly colored fresh fruit syrup and liquid palm sugar, sprinkled it with sweet corn kernels and cubes of chewy agar-agar and grass jelly, and topped it all off with a drizzle of sweetened condensed milk. Though I hadn't been back to Ipoh since I was a small child, this was one Malaysian specialty I remembered well. "The food in Ipoh is just as good as ever," my uncle said. "You'll see."

His words and the *ais kacang* energized me. I knew from my parents, and from the books and websites I had been devouring lately to learn more about my heritage, that one way to better understand what it means to be Malaysian—or part Malaysian, in my case—was through the country's cuisine. My mother is a second-generation Malaysian born in Ipoh to a family that emigrated from Punjab, in northwest India.

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(She met my father—an Indian from Bangalore—while studying nursing in England.) Her family came to Malaysia, like many Punjabis, during this part of the country’s tin mining boom of the early 20th century, a period that brought not only Indians, but Chinese as well—along with their different cuisines.

The food I grew up eating at home in the suburbs of New York City, where my parents eventually settled, was a pastiche of Malaysian and American staples. There were lots of rich and complex curries, but also dishes like *char kuey teow*, a savory stir-fry of tender rice noodles, shrimp, bean sprouts, fresh chives, and the pork sausage that Mom picked up at a local Chinese grocery. And juicy chicken and beef satay, grilled over charcoal and basted with lemongrass-infused oil. There were tuna cas-

the rich culinary heritage of the ethnic group that began migrating to this part of Malaysia, probably from Borneo, around 1,500 years ago. We had *nasi lemak*, a dish of rice cooked in coconut milk and flavored with turmeric, and *rendang ayam*, a curry of chicken and coconut milk that’s slowly simmered until the liquid is cooked away and the meat is caramelized on the outside and lusciously juicy within.

As we ate, my uncle explained: True, Ipoh is revered across Malaysia for its Chinese cooking—about 70 percent of the population here is Chinese, and the city’s dim sum is considered some of the best in the country. But Malaysia’s entire culinary heritage is represented in Ipoh, and that makes for a dramatic convergence of ingredients and flavors. The country—comprised of former British colo-



At left: *char kuey teow*, a stir-fry of rice noodles and shrimp (see recipe page 64); above: Sama Singh Bhagat Singh and Jeet Kaur Suba Singh, relatives of the author; previous pages, left to right: dim sum at Sum Kim Aik in Ipoh; *ikan sumbat*, fish stuffed with chile paste (see recipe page 66).

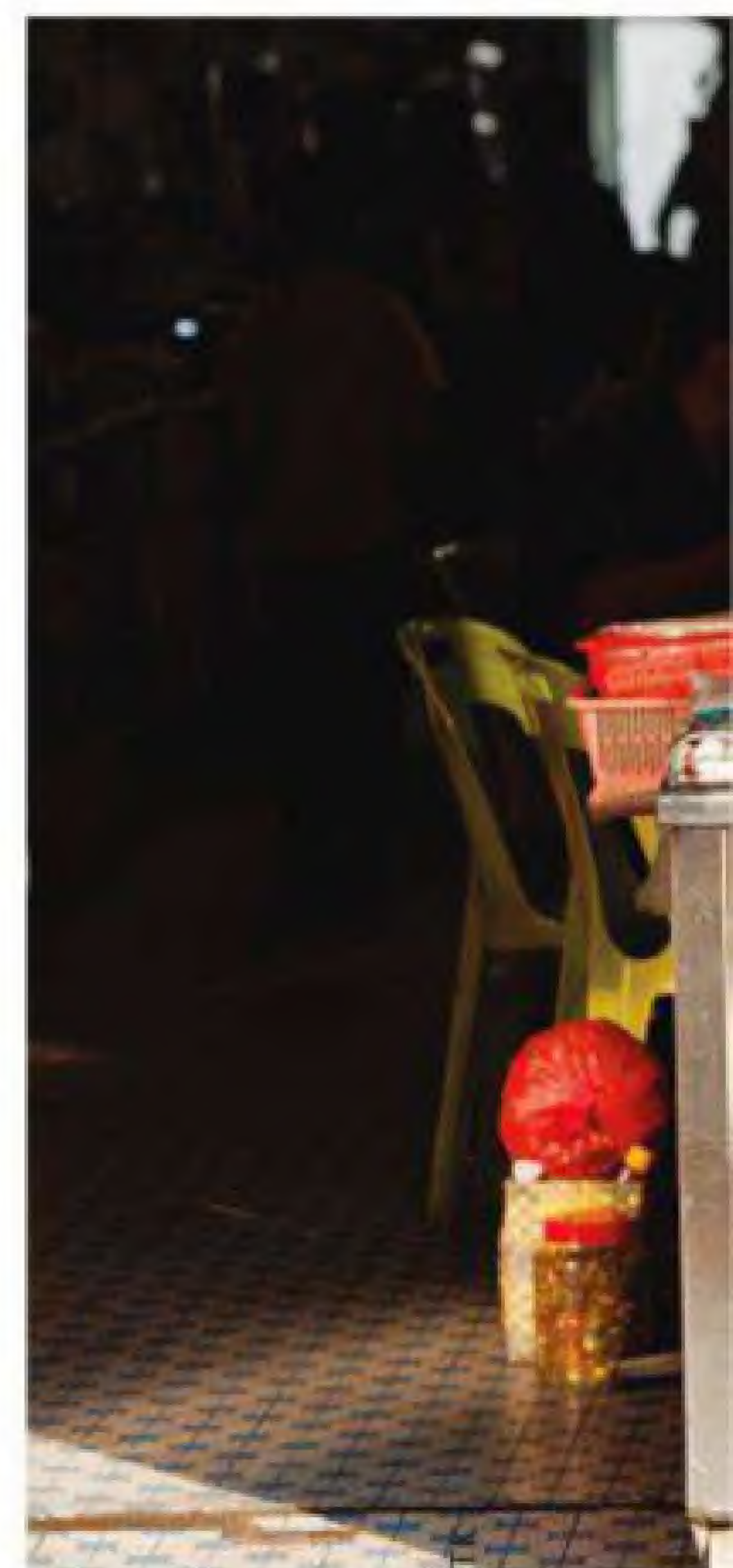
seroles and burgers and lasagnes, too. At our house, meals tended to be mix and match affairs, bringing together dishes from the different cuisines that captivated Mom’s appetite. I gleaned that this is what it’s like to eat in Ipoh. But my childhood memories of the place were hazy enough that this time around, it would be much like visiting for the first time.

Uncle Taru pulled into OldTown White Coffee—a chain, he explained, but one that celebrates the Chinese coffeehouse culture that’s specific to Ipoh. I knew that “white coffee,” a strong brew served with sweetened condensed milk, was an invention of Chinese tea sellers who set up shops in Ipoh’s Old Town about a hundred years ago. But the dishes we ordered weren’t Chinese. They were part of

nies and territories that united to form a nation in the early 1960s—is spread out over two land masses divided by the South China Sea. Ipoh lies in the western portion, on the Malay Peninsula, which extends southward from Thailand. Malay people brought to the Peninsula a style of cooking that resembles other tropical Southeast Asian cuisines in that there are chile-hot coconut milk curries and stews seasoned with brightly flavored ingredients like galangal and lemongrass as well as *belacan*, a pungent fermented shrimp paste. People from India—predominantly Tamils from the south, but also Punjabis and other groups from different parts of the country—brought with them curries spiced with cumin, turmeric, and mustard seed, as (continued on page 60)



Left to right: *rendang ayam*, a chicken curry made with coconut milk, ginger, and lemongrass; a vendor at Sin Yoon Loong coffee shop; a bar in Ipoh Old Town.



Left to right: shoppers at Menglembu market; a man at home in Kampung Kacang Putih, on the outskirts of Ipoh; *har gao* (shrimp dumplings).



Left to right: a cow grazing along the Kinta River; *tauge goreng* (stir-fried bean sprouts with Chinese chives); a shop in Ipoh Old Town. (See page 64 for recipes.)







TOP ROW FROM LEFT: TODD COLEMAN; DAVID HAGERMAN (2); MIDDLE ROW FROM LEFT: DAVID HAGERMAN (2); TODD COLEMAN; BOTTOM ROW FROM LEFT: DAVID HAGERMAN; TODD COLEMAN; DAVID HAGERMAN









Diners at Ong Kee, a restaurant in the center of Ipoh specializing in *tauge ayam*, a dish of poached chicken and bean sprouts.



(continued from page 55) well as soupy lentil and chickpea *dals*, buttery griddled flatbreads, *tandoor*-roasted meats, and vegetables like cauliflower and eggplant. And there are the many foods that came from southern China along with Hakka and Hokkien immigrants: the long-aged, salty-sweet “double black” soy sauce; the tofu; the starchy noodles, dumplings, and buns; and the vast array of dim sum that Ipohites snack on day and night. Perhaps even more extraordinary than the diversity of foods on offer is the fervor with which they’re all embraced. “To be a citizen of Ipoh,” my uncle said, “is to know and love food.”

Over the course of the next few days, I went out for breakfast, lunch, and dinner—and numerous snacks in between—with my uncle and his wife, my Aunt Manjit. Some mornings, we’d begin our days by picking up

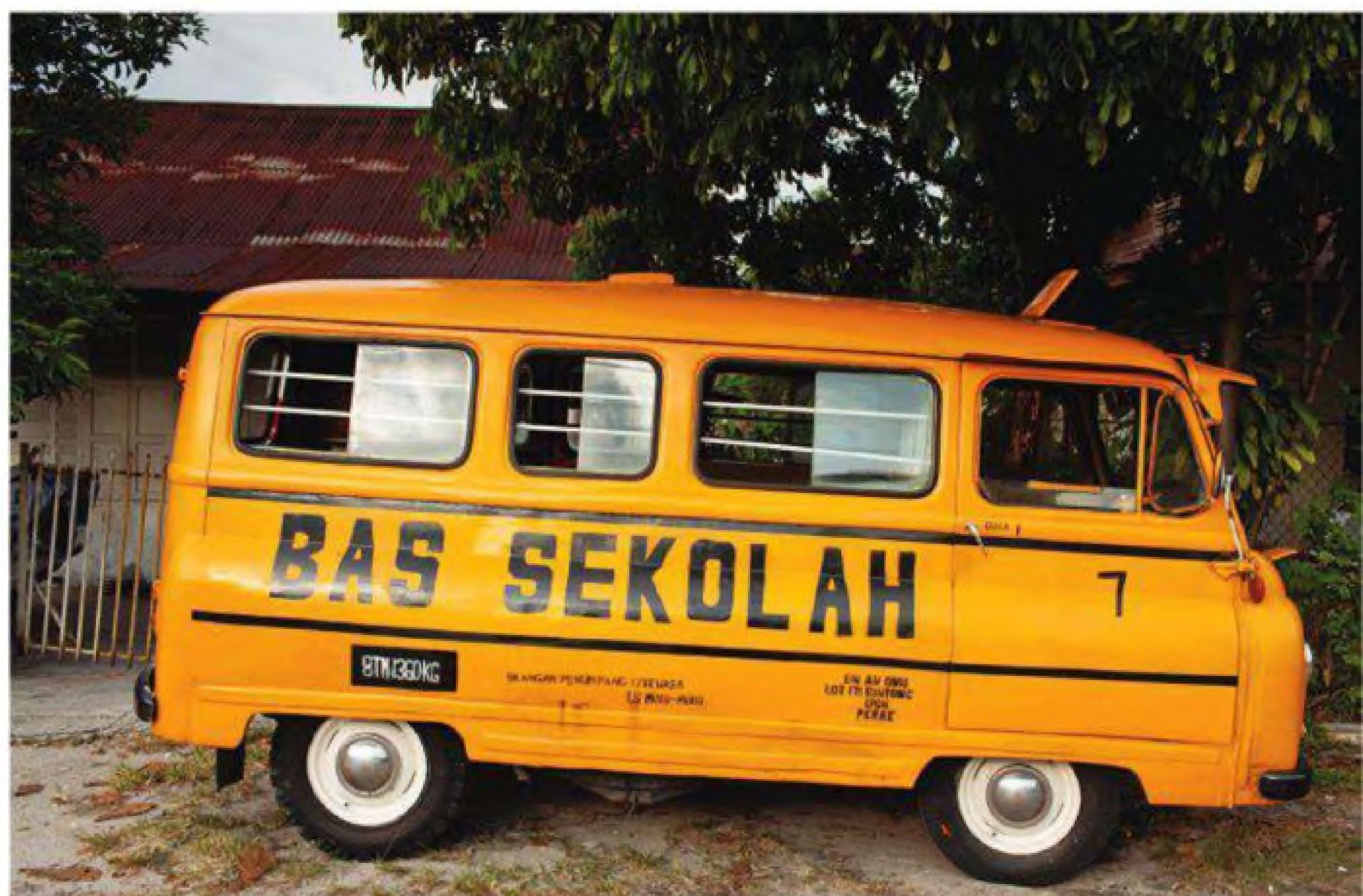
a *roti canai* (pronounced roh-tee chen-eye), a freshly made Indian flatbread griddled in ghee and served with a lentil *dal*. “Everyone eats *roti canai*,” Uncle Taru said. “No matter what your background is.” Other mornings, we’d go out into the streets and choose from the dozens of vendors there: Chinese noodle makers lined up next to Malay cooks selling *pisang goreng* (batter-fried bananas) and other breakfast snacks.

With so many choices for eating out, it’s a wonder my family spends any time at all in the kitchen. Of course, they do cook; they just tend to round out their homemade dishes with prepared favorites they’ve purchased. One evening, my aunt took me to her favorite *pasar malam*, or night market. At one table we came upon a young Malay man making *popiah*, a kind of fresh spring roll. My aunt

wagged her finger and asked him to slow down so that I could observe his process. He was waiting on a number of different customers at once, but he graciously showed me how he spread the translucent rice-flour wrapper with a sticky hoisin-style sauce. He then sprinkled it with chopped dried squid, julienned jicama, chopped peanuts, fresh cilantro, and sliced green onion, finally adding a drizzle of chili sauce and then rolling it all up, sealing it snugly, and slicing it into bite-size pieces. My aunt bought a half dozen, and later that night we ate them, along with *lok lok*—Malaysian-

Clockwise from top left: the author’s uncle, Abtar Singh, and his daughter, Gurji Kaur; *nasi lemak*, Malay coconut rice; a school bus; *popiah*, Malay spring rolls filled with shrimp, tofu, and jicama. (See page 64 for recipes.)

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DAVID HAGERMAN; TODD COLEMAN; TODD COLEMAN; TODD COLEMAN





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Chinese skewers of meatballs, fish balls, roast pork, sliced squid, chicken, and more—and some water spinach she'd stir-fried in a wok. It was like my mother's table all over again: a delicious hodgepodge of different cuisines, perfectly at home together.

ONCE I'D HAD A CHANCE to get my bearings in Ipoh, I made a date with Honey Ahmad, a cheerful, seemingly tireless 34-year-old native of the city and the editor of the culinary website FriedChillies. Among the sources I had tapped over the years to explore my Ipohite roots, FriedChillies had become a favorite. I met Ahmad at a coffee shop called Sun Yuan Foong, and she suggested I order *tauge goreng*, a heap of Ipoh's famous bean sprouts stir-fried quickly with garlic, a splash of soy sauce, and chives until they were just wilted.

"This is one of Ipoh's signature dishes," Ahmad explained. "The groundwater here is full of minerals, so our sprouts are fatter and

**They were the most delicious bean sprouts I have ever tasted: plump and flavorful and bursting with juice**

crunchier than others." Whatever the reason, they were the most delicious bean sprouts I have ever tasted: salty-sweet and bursting with juice. Ahmad smiled, pleased at my obvious and enthusiastic approval, and then gave me a taste of her *chee cheong fun*. Amped up with sesame oil, chili sauce, and sliced pickled peppers, these Chinese steamed rice noodle rolls were fantastic. If my uncle was right, and loving this food was the prerequisite to being a citizen of Ipoh, I was definitely starting to feel like one.

The next day Ahmad took me to the most famous of the city's dim sum palaces, Foh San, a sunny banquet hall. "It's packed every single morning," she told me. The place serves more than 100 different dim sum dishes; it was full of people happily noshing, using chopsticks to grab whatever tempted them from the various plates and bamboo steamers crowding their tables. We could have made a meal of the buns alone: big, fat *bao* stuffed with roast pork, or shrimp, or chicken and bok choy, or any number of other fillings. The *yong tau foo*, a Hakka specialty of vegeta-

bles or tofu stuffed with pounded mackerel, was light and delicately flavored. We ordered several rounds of this, including versions made with skinny eggplants and bitter melons, the mackerel stuffing seasoned with sesame oil and white pepper, and the whole thing steamed until meltingly tender. Over the course of several hours, we feasted on tender *har gao* (shrimp dumplings), custard tarts, and dozens of other irresistible dishes. I pointed out that, even though Ahmad isn't herself Chinese—her family's heritage is Indonesian—she certainly knows her way around a Chinese menu. "Well, I grew up eating this food," she said. "I've never thought of it as something foreign."

As delicious and exciting as all of this food was, after a week of meals at teahouses, cafés, markets, hawker centers, and street carts, I had to admit: I was craving an honest-to-goodness home-cooked dinner. And so I was delighted to be invited to the home of my great-uncle Chenna and his wife, Rato. They live in a town 15 miles outside of Ipoh called Batu Gajah, where many Punjabis first settled generations ago. My mother had lived with them while she was finishing high school, and they welcomed me into their home as if they'd just seen me yesterday.

After a few questions about my family in the States, they fell comfortably into discussing the latest local gossip. At the broad table in their dining room, they fed me Indian foods I recalled fondly from childhood: *aloo gobi* (sauteed cauliflower and potatoes with turmeric) and freshly griddled *chappati* flatbreads, hot and buttery as any Punjabi would demand. But we also ate *rendang ayam*, that slow-simmered, spicy Malay chicken dish. We all tucked in eagerly, and Aunt Manjit proclaimed, "We eat everything in this country, you know. There's no difference between this Indian dish and that Chinese dish. In Malaysia, we'll eat it because it's good."

I thought about the meals I'd enjoyed over the past few weeks and it suddenly came to me—in no instance did I see Chinese, Malay, and Indian influences fused together in a single dish. Instead, dishes from all three cultures share space on the table. But then there is always room for cooks of different stripes to bring their own interpretations to a recipe; the *rendang* we were eating, for example, was made in a soupier style than the classic Malay version. For dessert, there were Chinese pineapple tarts my aunt had picked up at the market. "We're Indian," she said as she served them, "but we're also Malaysian." Luckily, the same goes for me. 🍴

## The Guide Ipoh

For more information on travel in Ipoh, Malaysia, contact Tourism Malaysia at 800/558-6787 or visit [tourism.gov.my](http://tourism.gov.my).

### WHERE TO STAY

#### Impiana Hotel Ipoh

18 Jalan Raja Dr Nazrin Shah (60/5/255-5555; [impianaipoh.com](http://impianaipoh.com)). Rates: \$70 Double. All 200 rooms at the Impiana Ipoh have views of the surrounding limestone hills, and the hotel's central location makes it a good home base for exploring downtown.

### WHERE TO EAT

#### Foh San

51 Jalan Leong Sin Nam (60/5/254-0308; [www.fohsan.com.my](http://www.fohsan.com.my)). Known for generations as a temple of dim sum in Ipoh, Foh San also does a brisk business in baked goods, including durian- or pandan-flavored lotus paste mooncakes. Must-order items include *har gao* (shrimp dumplings) and *yong tau foo* (vegetables stuffed with pounded mackerel).

#### Sin Yoon Loong

15A, Jalan Bandar Timah. It's said that rich, thick Malaysian white coffee originated here, in the heart of Old Town Ipoh. Also delicious are the custard



tarts, crullers, and an array of other foods served by multiple vendors under one roof.

#### Taman Pakatan Pasar Malam (Night Market)

Corner of Hala Berchan Timur and Lorong Berchan. At sundown, snackers descend on this night market to sample foods like *lok lok* (a Malaysian-Chinese dish of skewered fish and meat served with peanut sauce) and *popiah* (spring rolls stuffed with squid or shrimp, tofu, peanuts, and jicama).

#### Min Jiet

92, Jalan Labat (60/17/534-2386). This coffee shop offers a comforting breakfast of thin *hor hee* noodles with clear broth and chicken. Customers show up throughout the day to drink rich white coffee thick with sweetened condensed milk or hot milky tea, and to snack on foods sold by a rotating cast of vendors.

#### Sun Yuan Foong

17 Jalan Bandar Timah. Arrive at this coffee shop at breakfast time for toasted sandwiches of butter and *kaya* (coconut jam). Come back for lunch, and enjoy one of Ipoh's most iconic dishes, *chee cheong fun*, in which broad rice noodles are served rolled and topped with chili sauce, pickled peppers, and sesame oil.





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### Aloo Gobi

(Curried Cauliflower and Potatoes)

SERVES 6-8

Brought to Ipoh by immigrants from India, this dish derives its great depth of flavor from a base of caramelized onions and an abundance of spices.

- ½ cup canola oil
- 2 medium russet potatoes, halved lengthwise and cut crosswise into 1½" pieces
- 1 large cauliflower (about 1 lb.) broken into medium-size florets
- 3 medium yellow onions, finely chopped
- 1 2" piece ginger, peeled and cut into 1" matchsticks
- 2 canned whole, peeled tomatoes, crushed
- 1½ tsp. ground coriander
- ½ tsp. cayenne
- ½ tsp. ground turmeric
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ½ cup frozen green peas
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. garam masala

**1** Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat; add potatoes, and cook, turning as needed, until browned all over and barely cooked through, about 12 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer potatoes to paper towels to drain; set aside. Add cauliflower to oil, and cook, turning as needed, until browned all over and barely cooked through, about 10 minutes; transfer to paper towels to drain, and set aside.

**2** Return skillet to medium-high heat; add onions, and cook, stirring, until lightly browned, about 12 minutes. Add ginger, and cook, stirring, until onions are slightly darker, about 2 minutes. Add tomatoes, and cook, stirring, until caramelized, 4-6 minutes. Add coriander, cayenne, turmeric, and salt and pepper, and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add potatoes, cauliflower, peas, and 1 tbsp. water, stir to combine, and cover skillet. Cook until potatoes and cauliflower are cooked through, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in cumin and garam masala.

### Har Gao

(Shrimp Dumplings)

MAKES 16 DUMPLINGS

These delicious dumplings stuffed with minced shrimp, scallions, water chestnuts, and bamboo shoots (pictured on page 57) are easy to make with store-bought *gyoza* (pot-sticker) wrappers.

- 1 1" piece pork fat or slab bacon (optional)
- 2¼ tsp. cornstarch
- ¾ tsp. oyster sauce
- ½ tsp. sugar
- ¼ tsp. sesame oil
- ¼ tsp. ground white pepper
- ½ egg white, lightly beaten
- 4 oz. shrimp, peeled, deveined, tails removed, finely minced
- ¼ cup minced water chestnuts
- 2 tbsp. very thinly sliced scallions (white part only)
- 1 tbsp. minced canned bamboo shoots
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 16 3½" round gyoza wrappers (see page 106)
- ½ cup hoisin sauce
- 2 tbsp. chopped scallions

**1** Bring pork fat and 1½ cups water to a boil in a 2-qt. saucepan over high heat; cover slightly, and cook until pork fat is soft and translucent and most water is evaporated, about 30 minutes. Drain fat, place in a small bowl, and cover with cold water; let sit until cool. Drain and transfer to a cutting board; finely mince and set aside. In a medium bowl, whisk together cornstarch, oyster sauce, sugar, sesame oil, pepper, and egg white; add reserved pork fat, shrimp, water chestnuts, scallions, bamboo shoots, and salt, and stir until evenly combined. Cover and chill filling for 2 hours.

**2** Working with one wrapper at a time, place 1½ tsp. filling in the center of wrapper, and fold in half to form a half-moon. Grip a single edge of the wrapper near one side of the dumpling, fold it inward, and pinch to form a pleat; repeat to create 6 pleats total. Repeat with remaining wrappers and filling to create 16 dumplings.

**3** Bring 1½ cups water to a boil in the bottom of a 12" skillet. Place dumplings into a 12" three-tiered bamboo steamer lined with parchment paper that has been poked with holes, and place steamer over water. Cover and steam until dumplings are cooked through, about 4 minutes. Serve with hoisin sauce mixed with scallions for dipping.

### Char Kuey Teow

(Stir-Fried Rice Noodles)

SERVES 2

Shrimp, Chinese sausage, chiles, and chives bring intense flavor to these wok-fried noodles, a popular Malay street food.

- 1 tbsp. dried shrimp paste

- 3 dried chiles de árbol, stemmed, torn into pieces, and soaked in boiling water for 5 minutes, drained
- 3 tbsp. peanut oil
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 12 medium shrimp, peeled, deveined, and tails removed
- 1 6" dried Chinese link sausage, peeled and thinly sliced (see page 106)
- 1 10-oz. package fresh broad Chinese rice noodles, rinsed and drained (see page 106)
- 1 tbsp. double black soy sauce (see page 106)
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 egg
- 4 oz. mung bean sprouts
- 6 Chinese chives or scallions, cut into 2" lengths

**1** Place shrimp paste on a small piece of foil, and wrap around paste to form a packet; heat broiler to high and broil packet until fragrant, about 8 minutes. Let paste cool slightly, then transfer to a cutting board and add drained chiles; using a chef knife, cut and mash paste and chiles together until a smooth paste forms; set paste aside.

**2** Heat oil in a 12" wok or nonstick skillet over high heat. Add paste, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add garlic, and cook, stirring, until just golden, about 30 seconds. Add shrimp and sausage, and cook, flipping shrimp once, until barely pink, about 1 minute. Break noodles apart with your fingers and add to wok along with soy sauce and sugar; cook, stirring often, until noodles are evenly coated and heated through, about 1 minute.

**3** Make a well in the center of the noodles; add egg, and cook, without stirring, until the white is half-set, about 45 seconds. Add sprouts and chives, and stir noodles and egg until evenly incorporated and sprouts and chives begin to wilt, about 1 minute. Serve immediately.

### Nasi Lemak

(Coconut Rice)

SERVES 8-10

This rich Malay coconut rice (pictured on page 60) is a breakfast favorite in Malaysia.

- 2 cups jasmine rice, washed 3 times and drained
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1½ tsp. ground turmeric
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 3 fresh or frozen kaffir lime

leaves (see page 106)

- 1 6" piece lemongrass, bruised with a mallet until pliable and tied into a knot
- 1 1" piece ginger, peeled and bruised until flattened

Stir together rice, coconut milk, turmeric, salt, lime leaves, lemongrass, ginger, and 1½ cups water in a 2-qt. saucepan, and bring to a boil over high heat. Cover tightly with lid and reduce heat to low; cook, without stirring, until all liquid is absorbed and rice is tender, about 20 minutes. Discard lime leaves, lemongrass, and ginger before serving.

### Popiah

(Fresh Spring Rolls)

MAKES 6

These shrimp- and tofu-filled spring rolls (pictured on page 60) are a popular street snack in Ipoh.

- 2¼ cups canola oil
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 10 oz. jicama, julienned
- 1½ tbsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. ground white pepper
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 5 oz. dried spiced bean curd, julienned (see page 106)
- ½ small yellow onion, very thinly sliced
- ½ cup small dried shrimp, soaked in boiling water for 20 minutes and drained (see page 106)
- 6 8"-square wheat spring roll wrappers, preferably Spring Home brand (see page 106)
- 1½ tsp. sriracha chili sauce (see page 106), plus more to taste
- 1½ tsp. hoisin sauce, plus more to taste
- 1 small head green leaf lettuce

**1** Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a 2-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add jicama, sugar, white pepper, and salt, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add 1 cup water, and bring to a boil; cook, stirring, until crisp-tender, about 7 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool.

**2** Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a 10" nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add eggs; cook, flipping once, until a firm omelette forms, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board, roll up like a cigar, and very thinly slice crosswise; set aside. Heat 1 tbsp. oil in skillet, and add bean curd; cook, stirring, until golden brown, about 8 minutes; set aside.



# Redefining the taste of gin for a new generation.

It started with a dream, a notion to craft a gin outside all expectations of gin. A spirit that would seduce the palate and sway the soul. Something that could capture the romance of an alluring flower petal, the succulence of ripe fruit and the sublime tang of a fresh berry.

Using the world's most precious botanicals, a custom-designed copper still and a proprietary distillation process, that dream has been realized. NOLET'S Silver Dry Gin is here. Created by the Nolet family, makers of Ketel One® Vodka, NOLET'S Silver is considered The New Face of Gin™.



Bob Nolet Carolus Nolet Sr. Carl Nolet Jr.

Botanical ingredients define the character of gin. For centuries that character has been dominated by juniper berries: piney and bitter. The Nolets aspired to develop a gin that was more pleasing to their palates.

So 11th generation sons Carl Jr. and Bob, along with their father, Carolus Sr., 10th generation owner of the Nolet Distillery, began experimenting with exotic botanicals, searching for floral and fruit-forward flavors – an alternative to traditional gins.

Slowly, the right notes emerged, harmonizing with each other beautifully in the glass. The Nolets highlight a few of the signature botanicals: alluring Turkish rose, sweet and succulent peach and robust, slightly tart raspberry.



## Turkish Rose

Also known as Damask rose, it adds a light, refined air.



## Peach

A succulent fruit with delicate flesh – the peach lends a fresh, sweet flavor.



## Raspberry

The raspberry provides a robust, slightly tart flavor.



The distillation of NOLET'S Silver is a proprietary process that blends tradition with innovation. To achieve the perfect balance of taste and texture, NOLET'S Silver is made in a custom copper still that combines pot still and column still distillation.

The botanicals in NOLET'S Silver are individually distilled or macerated, allowing each to become fully expressed in its signature floral and fruit-forward flavor. This, combined with a classic dry finish, sets NOLET'S Silver apart from other gins.

Following a secret recipe, the signature botanicals are individually infused into a base neutral grain spirit made from the finest winter wheat. Then, they are gently blended and allowed to rest in order to achieve the perfect balance.

The family crest adorning the bottle is a tribute to over 300 years of tradition and distilling experience of the Nolet family. Dedicated to the highest standards of quality, a member of the Nolet family approves every batch of NOLET'S Silver before bottling.

**NOLET'S® Silver Dry Gin. The New Face of Gin™.**

## Signature Cocktails

### NOLET'S Silver Dry Gin Martini

1 oz. NOLET'S Silver  
Stir NOLET'S Silver with ice in a cocktail shaker. Serve straight up in a martini glass. Garnish with a twist of lemon.

Total ABV: .48 ounces



### NOLET'S Silver Dry Gin & Tonic or Soda

1 oz. NOLET'S Silver  
3 oz. Tonic Water or Soda Water  
Pour NOLET'S Silver and tonic water or soda water into an ice-filled highball glass. Stir well. Garnish with a wedge of lime.

Total ABV: .48 ounces



### NOLET'S Silver Dry Gin Bramble

1 oz. NOLET'S Silver  
.50 oz. Fresh Lemon Juice  
.25 oz. Simple Syrup  
Cassis Liqueur

Pour first three ingredients into an ice-filled rocks glass. Stir well. Top with a light drizzle of Cassis Liqueur. Garnish with a raspberry.

Total ABV: .58 ounces





**3** Heat remaining oil in a 2-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer reads 350°. Add onions, and fry until crisp and browned, about 4 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer onions to paper towels to drain, and set aside. Add shrimp to oil, and fry until crisp and browned, about 2 minutes; transfer to paper towels to drain, and set aside.

**4** To assemble, arrange 1 spring roll wrapper on a work surface so a corner faces you. Brush bottom third of wrapper with  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. each chili and hoisin sauces, and place 1 leaf of lettuce on top; put  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup jicama,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tbsp. sliced omelette, and 1 tbsp. each bean curd, fried onions, and fried shrimp on lettuce. Lift bottom corner of wrapper over filling; pull wrapper back against filling to tighten. Fold in sides, and roll forward to form a 5"-long roll, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " thick; repeat with remaining wrappers, chili, hoisin, lettuce, jicama, omelette, bean curd, onions, and shrimp. Transfer rolls to a serving platter, and cut each crosswise into 4 pieces. Drizzle with more chili sauce and hoisin, if you like.

### Rendang Ayam

(Spiced Chicken Rendang)

SERVES 6-8

This flavorful Malaysian-style chicken curry (pictured on page 56) is a braise in reverse: The chicken is cooked in coconut milk flavored with spices and begins to brown when most of the liquid cooks away, creating a beautifully caramelized exterior.

- 1 3-4-lb. chicken, cut into 8 pieces by your butcher
- 5 dried chiles de árbol, stemmed and roughly chopped
- 3 shallots, roughly chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 2 stalks lemongrass, tough outer layers removed, interior layers finely chopped
- 1 3"-piece ginger, peeled and thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 2"-piece fresh or frozen turmeric, peeled and thinly sliced, or 1 tbsp. ground turmeric
- 3 tbsp. peanut oil
- 6 cardamom pods, cracked open
- 6 fresh or frozen kaffir lime leaves (see page 106)
- 4 whole star anise
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- $2\frac{1}{2}$  cups coconut milk
- 1 tsp. sugar
- Kosher salt, to taste

**1** Cut chicken: Cut each breast crosswise into 3 pieces, and halve each thigh, drumstick, and wing piece, discarding wing tips, to produce 18 pieces total; set aside. Combine chiles, shallots, garlic, lemongrass, ginger, turmeric, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water in a small food processor, and process until a smooth paste forms; set spice paste aside.

**2** Heat oil in a 12" nonstick skillet over medium heat; add cardamom, lime leaves, star anise, and cinnamon, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add spice paste, and cook, stirring often, until caramelized and the oil begins to separate from the paste, 8-10 minutes. Add coconut milk, sugar, and salt, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring, until reduced by a third, about 20 minutes. Add chicken, stirring to coat in sauce, and cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce is the consistency of thick pea soup, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 hours.

**3** Continue to cook, stirring constantly to prevent sauce and chicken from burning, until sauce and chicken turn a dark caramel color and the sauce coats the chicken, about 20 minutes. Discard whole spices before serving.

### Tauge Goreng

(Stir-Fried Bean Sprouts)

With Chinese Chives

SERVES 4-6

Bean sprouts to take center stage

in this quick, flavor-packed stir-fry (pictured on page 57) of just a few ingredients allows.

- 2 tbsp. peanut oil
- 1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 lb. mung bean sprouts
- 1 tbsp. soy sauce
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 Chinese chives or scallions, thinly sliced

Heat a 12" skillet over high heat; add oil, and swirl to coat bottom of skillet. Add garlic, and cook, stirring, until just golden, about 30 seconds. Add sprouts, soy sauce, and pepper, and cook, stirring, until sprouts just begin to wilt, about 1 minute. Add chives, and cook, stirring, until just wilted, about 15 seconds. Serve immediately.

### Ikan Sambat

(Chile Fried Fish)

SERVES 4

In Malaysia, this pan-fried fish dish (pictured on page 53) is typically made with stingray filets, but any six to ten-inch whole fish will do.

- $1\frac{1}{4}$  oz. tamarind paste (see page 106)
- 2 tbsp. small dried shrimp, soaked in boiling water for 10 minutes, drained (see page 106)
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 red Holland chile, stemmed and roughly chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$  small yellow onion, roughly chopped

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup canola oil
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. dried shrimp paste (see page 106)
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. sriracha chili sauce (see page 106)
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 small branzino, black sea bass, or bluefish (about 12 oz. each), gutted and cleaned
- 2 lime wedges, for serving

**1** Bring tamarind and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water to a boil in a 1-qt. saucepan over high heat, stirring until paste is dissolved; pour through a fine strainer into a small bowl, discard solids, and set tamarind sauce aside. Put shrimp, garlic, chile, and onion in a small food processor, and process until smooth; set chile mixture aside.

**2** Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat; add dried shrimp paste, and, using a spoon, mash paste with oil. Cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add chile mixture; cook, stirring, until mixture is no longer raw, 4-6 minutes. Add tamarind sauce, sugar, paprika, chili sauce, and salt, and cook, stirring, until thick, 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat; transfer chile paste to a bowl.

**3** Wipe skillet clean, add remaining oil, and return to high heat. Using a spoon, stuff fish cavities with chile paste, and season with salt and pepper. Fry fish in skillet, turning once, until cooked through, 10-12 minutes. Squeeze lime over fish.

## Ipoh Ingredients



The recipes featured in this story rely on a number of special ingredients that give Malaysian dishes their characteristic balance, depth, and complex layers of flavor. **1** Double black soy sauce, aged longer than traditional soy sauce and mixed with a small amount of molasses, imparts a robust, subtly caramelized flavor and an appetizing light brown tint to dishes. **2** *Lap Cheong*, or Chinese sausages, are made from pork and a high amount of pork fat, seasoned with salt, sugar, and rice wine, and allowed to ferment, which gives them a delectably sweet-sour undertone. **3** Shaped in small rectangular blocks or round cylinders, *belacan*, or dried shrimp paste, has the consistency of clay, a pungent smell, and an intensely fishy taste before it's cooked. Once cooked, however, it becomes a delicate background seasoning. **4** Velvety in texture and neutral in taste, *kuey teow*, or flat rice noodles, are the perfect backdrop for the classic robust seasonings of Ipoh stir-fries. Thin, bright white, flat, and sold fresh, these are found in the refrigerated sections of Chinese markets; use within a day or two of purchase because they dry out quickly. **5** Dried shrimp—small, headless, peeled, and sun-dried—lend a briny note to dishes. When purchasing, make sure to check the color: They should be pale pink to orange pink. Too intense a pink shade could indicate excessive preservatives. **6** Spiced tofu is firm, somewhat dry and spongy, and flavored with soy sauce and a variety of Asian spices. Dark golden in color, it comes shrink-wrapped or in small plastic packages and, unlike other tofus, is not stored in water. Find it in the refrigerated section of Asian grocery stores. —Betty Cortina

TODD COLEMAN



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*sunshine.*



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*Sour pickles*  
(see recipe on page 72)





*Indian lime pickles  
(see recipe on page 72)*

# PRESERVING PLENTY

The process of fermentation is the secret behind  
some of the world's most delicious foods

BY SARA DICKERMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD COLEMAN



## NURTURING LIVE-CULTURED FOODS, WATCHING

**W**HEN I WAS A KID, every pickle my father ate was a bit of a disappointment. Dad, who grew up in the 1930s and '40s in the Bronx, New York, remembered plucking kosher sours out of barrels filled with cloudy brine—"Now those were pickles!" he'd tell us. I only knew Claussen and other vinegar-cured pickles, the kind you buy in jars off the supermarket shelf, and I liked them just fine. But when I finally tasted a real pickle—the kind made the old-fashioned way, fermented with nothing more than salt, water, and time—I realized what I had been missing. A vinegary pickle plows through your palate with its tartness (often in a most pleasing way), but a live-cultured, salt-cured, fermented one tells a more multifaceted story. It is sour, to be sure, but it tastes of something more, something elusive: It's the flavor of Middle Europe captured in one bite.

When I started cooking for a living, I realized that the complexity I'd tasted in that pickle is the hallmark of well-made fermented foods, which include some of my very favorite things to eat and drink: not just pickles, but aged cheeses, tangy sourdough breads, blistering kimchis, tart yogurts, winy salamis, and of course, wine itself. I'd rush to volunteer on fermenting projects in the restaurants where I worked: I was eager to learn how salted cabbage could turn into sauerkraut, and how buttermilk mixed with cream and stuck in the back pantry, turned into a pretty good approximation of crème fraîche in a few days. Making my own yogurt seemed like kitchen

magic, the way it so effortlessly soured and thickened overnight.

I've been out of professional kitchens for several years, and in the meantime, it seems fermented foods have become something of a culinary trend here in the States. Beer making, cheese making, sourdough bread making, and, of course, pickle curing are now legitimate hobbies for the industrious DIY food lover. With markets stocked more generously than ever with items like kefir (an effervescent milk drink) and kombucha (fermented tea), I grew curious about the vast range of fermented, or live-cultured, beverages, foods, and condiments found around the world (see "The World of Fermentation," page 74) and how they're actually made. What's happening inside bottles of the fizzy, malty, bread-based Eastern European drink *kvas*? And could I actually make things like soy sauce and miso at home?

THE ANSWER TO THAT last question is yes, though it would take a long time to make them. I learned this from a man named Sandor Katz, who is the Johnny Appleseed of fermentation in this country. In the final days of summer last year, I headed to a bucolic hillside farm in central Tennessee for Katz's five-day workshop on fermentation. I was part of an eclectic group of 13 students, including a newly wed homesteading couple from Maryland, a performance artist and poet from Georgia, and a General Motors wheel buyer based out of Michigan, who had gathered in the humid basement of a midcentury ranch house to learn how to preserve foods.

Some good friends of mine had introduced me to Katz by giving me his celebrated book

*Wild Fermentation* (Chelsea Green, 2003). Inspired by it, they were running out of counter space for all their pickle and sauerkraut projects. In *Wild Fermentation*, Katz writes with an infectious combination of erudition and evangelical vim about the pleasures of fostering and consuming edible cultures, from the familiar (sauerkraut, beer) to the arcane (a sweet Japanese rice beverage called *amazake*, a bubbly Guyanese soft drink called sweet potato fly). Katz is a 49-year-old with piercing blue eyes and a shock of steely curls that creep down over a memorable set of silvery muttonchops. He was not raised in a pickling family: He grew up a city boy, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, enjoying deli pickles just like my father did. As a young man, he did policy work for the city, but in 1993 he made a radical change in his life. He moved to a commune in the hills of central Tennessee and began gardening. "It was a rude surprise to me that all of my cabbages and all of my radishes were ready at the same time," says Katz. Not quite knowing what to do with his bumper crop, he remembered that sauerkraut might be an option, and using *The Joy of Cooking* and some favorite macrobiotic cookbooks as guides, he set to fermenting his first batch. The garden kept providing, he kept pickling and preserving, and before long, he was hooked. "Being able to create that flavor was really exciting," says Katz. "And figuring out an effective way to keep eating those fresh vegetables through the fall and winter was also really exciting."

Katz began our fermentation workshop with a lesson on sauerkraut. As we sliced cabbage and tossed it in a stainless steel bowl, he explained that long before Pasteur pinpointed tiny organisms—microbes—as the source of

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## THEIR COLORS CHANGE, AND TASTING THE RESULTS, IS INCREDIBLY SATISFYING

fermentation, cultures around the world had harnessed the power of fermentation to preserve food and improve its qualities (nutritive, alcoholic, or merely aesthetic). He revealed how wild colonies of microflora—whether yeast, bacteria, molds, or a combination—grow on food, changing its nature as the microorganisms ingest sugars or alcohols and excrete carbon dioxide, acids, or alcohols. The *koji* molds that spring up spontaneously on rice, for example, happen to be the same ones whose enzymes can turn cooked rice's starch into sugars. Those sugars then feed yeasts that transform the rice into the alcoholic drink sake.

Katz defines fermentation as “the transformative action of microorganisms.” Often the microorganisms in question are bacteria. Take the sauerkraut we were making, for example. When chopped cabbage is combined with salt, squeezed to release its juices, and left to sit in the resulting brine, the various bacteria on the surface of the cabbage begin to grow, creating an acidic environment that transforms the flavor of the cabbage into the sweet-funky stuff we know as sauerkraut. This acidity also discourages the growth of pathogenic bacteria.

Similarly, bacteria can also change milk into yogurt and fresh cheese, and help turn fresh sausages into long-lived salamis. But bacteria are not the only microbes that transform our edibles: Yeasts consume the sugars in grains and fruits and excrete alcohol, creating beer, wine, and spritzy tonics. Sourdough bread is another yeast-bacteria collaboration: The gassy bubbles exuded by the yeast in the sourdough make the bread rise, while bacteria create a sour environment that gives the bread its characteristic tang. In Asia, countless foods are fermented,

but beans account for a great many of them, from miso and soy sauce (which can take as much as three years to produce) to black bean paste and tempeh, a patty of soybeans bound by *Rhizopus oligosporus* mold spores.

In the contemporary world, we have outsourced these various processes to industries both small and large, but Katz is a cheerleader for bringing them back to the home kitchen. “A lot of people have the idea that eating cultured foods can be healthy for them, and maybe they'd like to make sauerkraut or yogurt,” he says. “But they just have this fear of doing it because they don't have a degree in microbiology.” True, there are some bacteria that can give you a gastrointestinal malady or worse, but we are reliant, too, on beneficial bacteria that inhibit the growth of the very toxins we fear.

In fact, live-cultured foods—foods that have not been pasteurized or have had the process of fermentation stopped in some other way—have long been associated with good health: They are believed to soothe the stomach and boost immune function. Yogurt sales, for example, have boomed in the past few years, in no small part because of yogurt's “probiotic” promise to regulate digestion. Katz is intrigued by studies that suggest eating cultured foods is fortifying: He himself has been HIV positive since 1991 and strongly believes that his habit of eating cultured foods has helped him maintain—and sometimes, after health downturns, regain—his health, alongside his use of antiretroviral drugs.

Still, many home cooks are cagey about fermentation precisely because it does not always go smoothly. Harmless but ungainly molds can bloom on the surface of a long-aged project, and, yes, bottles can explode—as my class

learned when we made a watermelon drink, soured and carbonated with a bacterial yeast culture called *tibicos*. Despite Katz's urging to use plastic bottles, we ran out and decanted the drink into an old vodka bottle. In the morning there was shrapnel: The jug had exploded in the night, leaving shards of glass and sticky pink fluid all over the kitchen. We were lucky that no one was hurt. For Katz, such mishaps are part of the learning process. “There's a certain amount of flexibility and improvisation that you need to have if you're going to do these things,” he said, as we cleaned up the mess.

ON THE LAST EVENING of the workshop, there was a huge bonfire party where we ate goat from the farm and foods we'd made in the workshop, including tempeh, pickles, and lots of sauerkraut. After that sendoff, I came home from Tennessee and quickly started culturing with wild enthusiasm—making homemade Concord grape soda, crunchy pickles from baby vegetables I had bought at the farmers' market, sourdough bread, and vinegar from leftover wine. My basement shelves quickly filled with jars and bottles, and I found true satisfaction in the mere act of nurturing them, watching their colors change, and ultimately tasting their transformation.

As a caregiver for millions of microorganisms, I have to admit, I've started to develop favorites. I'm darned proud of my kefir, whose culture keeps rolling along on my countertop. And my vinegar, well, it's pretty terrific—I've got my eyes on an oak barrel to make my next attempt in. And I've kept putting up new batches of sauerkraut and cucumber pickles: Katz's original fermentation revelation passed on to yet another fermentation convert. 🍷



## SOUR PICKLES

MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART

Most commercial pickles are preserved with vinegar, which is the product of one kind of fermentation. But sour pickles (pictured on page 68) develop their complex flavor thanks to lactic fermentation, the process by which the naturally occurring bacteria *Lactobacillus* transforms and preserves foods, usually in a brine. The balance of salinity is key: You want enough salt to get a nice, crisp pickle and to prevent the growth of pathogens or mold, but not so much that the pickles are unpleasant to eat. Traditional techniques for creating firm pickles include adding grape leaves, oak leaves, or horseradish leaves—all rich in tannins, which prevent the pickles from going soft—to the brine. In a sterilized 2-qt. glass jar, combine  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup packed dill fronds, 1 tsp. whole black peppercorns, 10 cloves garlic, peeled, 5 dried chiles de árbol, and 1 fresh grape leaf (optional). Place  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb. 3–4" long mini gherkins in the jar over the aromatics. Dissolve 6 tbsp. kosher or sea salt in 6 cups warm filtered water in a bowl to make a brine, and then pour the brine over the gherkins until covered. Pour any remaining brine or water into a resealable plastic sandwich bag, and place the bag on top of the gherkins to keep them submerged. Drape a large kitchen towel over the jar and let sit at room temperature (ideally 70°–75°) until gherkins have cured to your taste, about 3–4 weeks. Once pickles are soured, cover jars with lids, and refrigerate for up to 1 week.

## INDIAN LIME PICKLES

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS

Tangy, tender lime pickles (pictured on page 69) are a flavorful staple of India, a condiment that adds sour, spicy punch to meals. We've adapted the classic recipe, which calls for fermenting the citrus with salt in the sun before blending it with a spice paste and lime juice, by using small and sweet Key limes rather than traditional Indian varieties. Using a paring knife, quarter 25 Key limes lengthwise, leaving them attached by  $\frac{1}{2}$ " at the stem ends. Using your fingers, rub the limes inside and out with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup kosher or sea salt in a bowl. Transfer limes and salt to a 1-pint sterilized glass jar, packing them in tightly to fit. Cover jar with lid, and place jar near a window or any other spot indoors where it will receive a lot of sunlight and warmth; let the jar sit in this environment for 1 week, shaking the jar once a day to evenly disperse brine. After 1 week, heat  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup canola oil in a 10" skillet over medium-high heat; add  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. brown mustard seeds,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. fenugreek seeds, and 20 fresh or frozen curry leaves, and cook, stirring, until seeds stop popping and spices are lightly toasted, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a spice grinder or small food processor, and process into a smooth paste. Stir in 2 tsp. cayenne, 1 tsp. ground turmeric, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. asafetida (see page 106). Mix spice mixture with 1 cup fresh lime juice, and then pour mixture into jar with limes; seal with lid. Shake jar to evenly disperse ingredients, and store in the refrigerator for at least 1 week to infuse flavors. Use for up to 1 year.

## SPICED RED WINE VINEGAR

MAKES ABOUT 4 QUARTS

Wine left out in the open air will naturally turn to vinegar. How does this happen? *Acetobacter* bacteria and *Mycodermi aceti* yeasts accumulate on the surface of the wine, gobbling up its alcohol and turning it into vinegar. Vinegar fermentation requires plenty of oxygen, so it is important to have as much of your wine as possible exposed to the air—an open carafe, jug, or crock will work fine. While vinegar-making microflora will spontaneously gather on your wine, you may choose to kick-start the process with a mother of vinegar culture (see page 106). This red wine vinegar (pictured at right) is flavored with star anise and cloves, and makes an excellent all-purpose seasoning for everything from salad dressings to marinades. In a 1-gallon glass jar or crock, combine one 8-oz. mother of vinegar culture for red wine with its liquid, 2 cups red wine, and 1 cup filtered water. Cover the mouth of the jar with a triple layer of cheesecloth, and secure with kitchen twine or a rubber band. Set aside in a warm, dark place, or set near a window and cover with a dark cloth. After 2 weeks, add 2 more cups wine. Continue adding 2 cups wine every 2 weeks until you have 1 gallon total. After about a month, once the vinegar has sufficiently soured, pour it through a fine strainer into a 6-qt. saucepan and heat over medium heat until an instant-read thermometer reads 155°. Maintain this temperature for 30 minutes (this will stop the alcoholic conversion process and produce a stable vinegar). Remove from heat and add 20 whole allspice berries, 16 whole cloves, 10 whole star anise, 8 sticks cinnamon, and eight 1"-wide strips orange zest; let cool. Pour vinegar into 4 sterilized 1-qt. glass jars, dividing spices evenly between jars, and cover with lids. Let sit until vinegar is flavored with spices, at least 1 week.

## FERMENTED BEETS WITH ORANGE AND GINGER

MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART

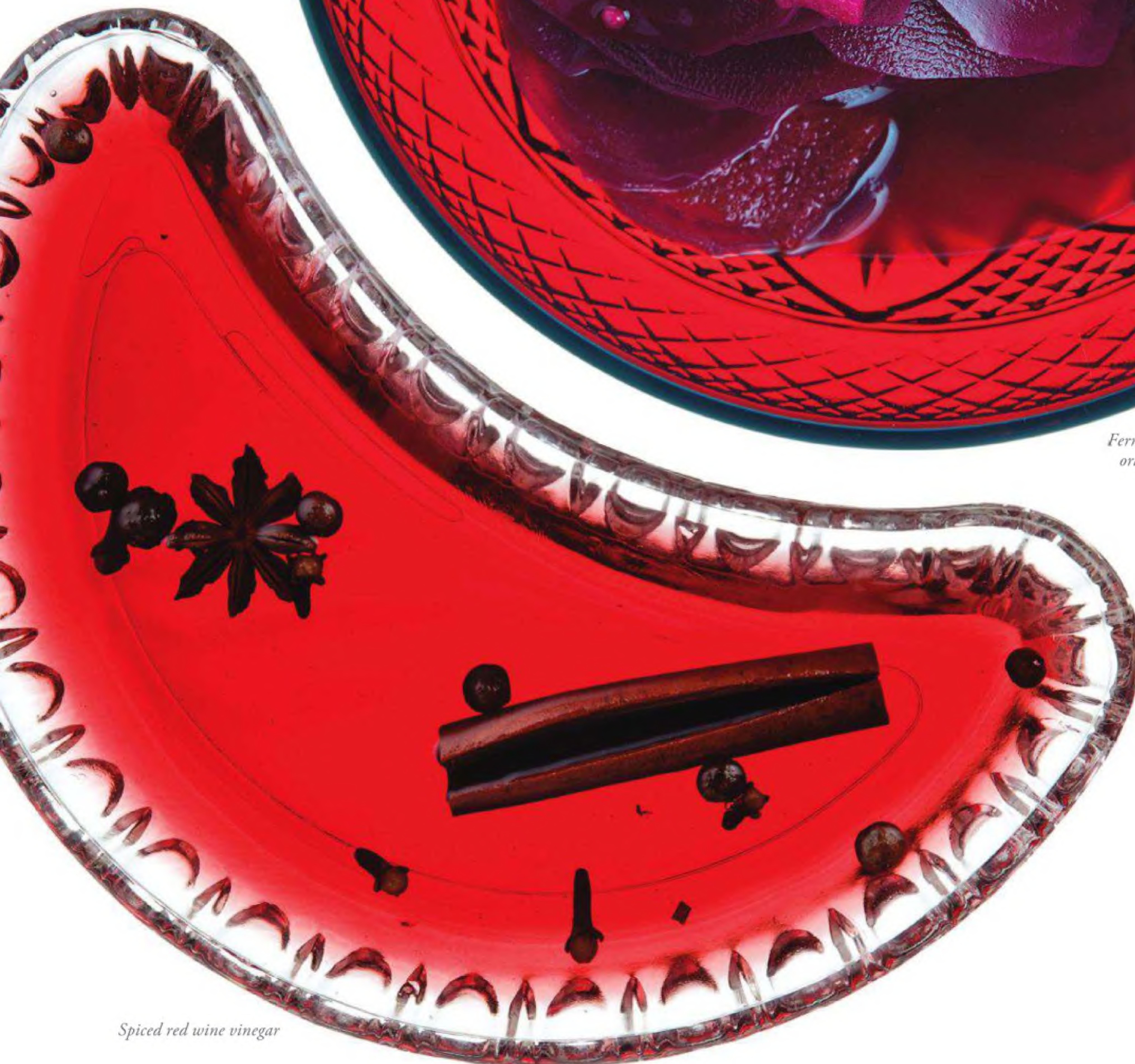
Whey, the nutritious by-product of the cheesemaking and yogurtmaking process, is full of *Lactobacilli*, so it serves as a fantastic fermentation starter. This recipe (pictured at right) is inspired by *rosl*, a Jewish specialty from the Ukraine that calls for pickling beets in brine. The sweet, spiced beets are seasoned with orange zest and mustard seeds, and make for a delicious accompaniment to roast meats or fish. You can purchase whey online (see page 106) or make your own by draining store-bought live-culture yogurt in a cheesecloth-lined mesh sieve over a bowl: The drained liquid is whey. Bring a 4-qt. saucepan of salted water to a boil, and add 4 medium beets, peeled and sliced into  $\frac{1}{8}$ "-thick rounds; cook until just tender, about 3 minutes. Drain and transfer to a bowl of ice water, and let sit for 2 minutes to chill. Drain and place beets in a sterilized 1-qt. glass jar along with 1 tsp. brown mustard seeds, 1 tsp. whole allspice berries, 1 tsp. whole black peppercorns, 1 tsp. whole cloves, 2 sticks cinnamon, one 1" piece ginger, peeled and cut into matchsticks, and the peel of 1 orange, cut off in wide strips. In a medium bowl, stir together 2 tbsp. whey, 2 tbsp. honey, and 3 cups warm filtered water; pour over beets until covered. Pour any remaining brine or water into a resealable plastic sandwich bag, and place bag on top of beets to keep them submerged. Drape a large kitchen towel over the jar, and let sit at room temperature (ideally 70°–75°) until beets have cured to your taste, about 1 week. Once beets are cured, season them with kosher or sea salt to taste, cover jar with lid, and refrigerate for up to 1 week.







*Fermented beets with  
orange and ginger*



*Spiced red wine vinegar*



## THE WORLD OF FERMENTATION

Practically every culture harnesses the natural process of fermentation to preserve and enhance the flavor of certain foods. In fact, fermentation is responsible for some of our most basic staples, like coffee, vanilla, chocolate **8**, and some teas. Black *pu-erh* **1** tea, for example, from Yunnan, China, has an earthy taste thanks to the way its leaves are cured. Fermented dairy foods, too, are ancient and ubiquitous. All yogurt is lacto-fermented: Lightly tart *labneh* **6** from the Middle East is a thickened version that's been drained of whey. Kefir **18**, an effervescent milk drink from Central Asia, is bubbly with yeast. Fresh cheeses, like ricotta, farmer's cheese, and *kajmak*, from the Balkans, are only mildly fermented. But ripened *kajmak* **12** develops a pungent tang that tastes like a cross between goat cheese and Roquefort. Aged, washed-rind cheeses like *Epoisses de Bourgogne* **10** take on a pungent creaminess thanks to a bacteria called *Brevibacterium linens*. Butter is more flavorful when fermented: Cultured butter **30** is made with fermented cream, which gives it a tangy depth. **11** Fermented beans are believed to have been first made thousands of years ago by Chinese Buddhist monks seeking an alternative to meat. By the 8th century, Japanese home cooks were making miso **34**, a ferment of soybeans and grain—usually rice or barley—with salt and the mold *Aspergillus oryzae*; the longer it ferments, the darker and more flavorful it becomes. Soy sauce **2** is made using *Aspergillus* to ferment a brew of soybeans and wheat. The sticky whole-bean Japanese condiment *natto* **3** is made with soybeans that have been cooked, cooled, and wrapped in straw mats until they ferment with *Bacillus natto*. The Chinese call fermented soybean curd *fu-ru* **25**, or spoiled milk; these creamy cubes are as piquant as blue cheese and great for flavoring stir-fried greens. While many store-bought foods have been pasteurized to stop fermentation, Bragg Organic Raw Apple Cider Vinegar **4** is alive, as evidenced by its healthy vinegar mother—a cloudy blob of the beneficial bacteria *Acetobacter*, pectin, and apple residues—and its fresh apple flavor. Table olives **5** are fermented in a brine solution that encourages *Lactobacillus*, one of the main bacteria responsible for sauerkraut **20** and other pickles like Korean kim-

chi **9** (made with everything from cabbage to radish), Japanese pickled burdock **24**, salted turnip **26** and pickled mustard greens **19** from all across Asia, and *turshi* **27**, a brined, mixed pickle from the Middle East that is sometimes flavored with hot pepper and horseradish. *Poi* **32**, the Hawaiian paste made from taro, is traditionally fermented in pits. Black garlic **14**, which originated in Korea, has a fennel-like taste; it has been heat-cured until its sugars and amino acids produce the dark pigment melanoidin. Fish is another important category of fermented foods: Vietnamese salted tuna **17** is cured in a brine solution with fish sauce, oil, and sugar. The ancient Romans made a fish sauce called *garum* that was a precursor to Italy's *colatura di alici* **13**, an amber liquid made of aged, salt-cured anchovies that adds flavor to sauces and vegetables. Beverages like beer and wine are among the world's oldest fermented products. Beer is made by adding yeast to a malted grain, hops, and water. (Marmite **21**, a beloved umami-packed British sandwich spread, is made with spent brewers' yeast.) Fresh fruit is added to lambic beers, like Frank Boon's Black Cherry Kriek Lambic **7** from Belgium, to provoke a second fermentation. Any fruit can be fermented into wine: Commonly referred to as the "Englishman's grape," elderberries **35** create a sweetly sour version. *Kvas* **31** from Russia is a lightly fermented malted beverage typically made with rye bread; *mauby* **22** from the Caribbean is made from the fermented bark of the carob tree; and Mexico's *pulque* **16** is fermented agave. The culture responsible for the fizzy, fermented tea *kombucha* **33** is a thriving symbiotic colony of bacteria and yeasts. Fermented grains are at work in lots of foods: *Idli* **15**, the savory cakes from India, are made from a bubbly batter of ground rice and black gram *dahl* that's left out overnight to attract airborne bacteria. *Puto* **29** from the Philippines is similar but made with ground rice only. Meats are preserved by fermentation, too, from Vietnam's *nem chua* **23**, made by fermenting garlicky raw pork sausage wrapped in banana leaves, to Italian *soppresata* **28**, which is dry-cured with salt and aged until its flavor deepens.

—Marne Setton



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2



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16



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20



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27



28



31



32



33



34



35



## CONCORD GRAPE SODA

MAKES ABOUT 1 LITER

Yeasts are tremendous bubblers—the carbon dioxide they exude is responsible for inflating breads and pastries, and they also add sparkle to many drinks. Beer, champagne, and hard ciders get their carbonation (and their alcohol) from yeasts, and so do some soft drinks, which ferment for shorter periods and therefore aren't so alcoholic. This sweet, fizzy Concord grape soda (pictured opposite, at top right) is set to bubbling with a purchased culture of champagne yeast (see page 106), which gives it a pronounced effervescence. To attain ample carbonation, you have to pressurize the soda in sealed vessels, preferably plastic bottles with screw tops that won't explode if too much CO<sub>2</sub> builds up. For starters, bring 2¾ cups pure Concord grape juice, 2¾ cups filtered water, and ¼ cup sugar (or ½ cup agave nectar) to a simmer in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-low heat, and cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly reduced, about 30 minutes. Stir in ⅛ tsp. champagne yeast, and drape a large kitchen towel over saucepan; let sit for 24 hours. Using a funnel, pour soda into a sterilized 1-liter plastic soda bottle, filling to within 1" of the top or lower. Close bottle tightly with top and let sit at room temperature (ideally 70°–75°) for 24 hours (the bottle should become rock-hard with the pressure that builds up within). Refrigerate soda for 2 days before opening and serving. Drink soda within 1 week of opening, and store in the refrigerator.

## MIXED BABY VEGETABLE PICKLES

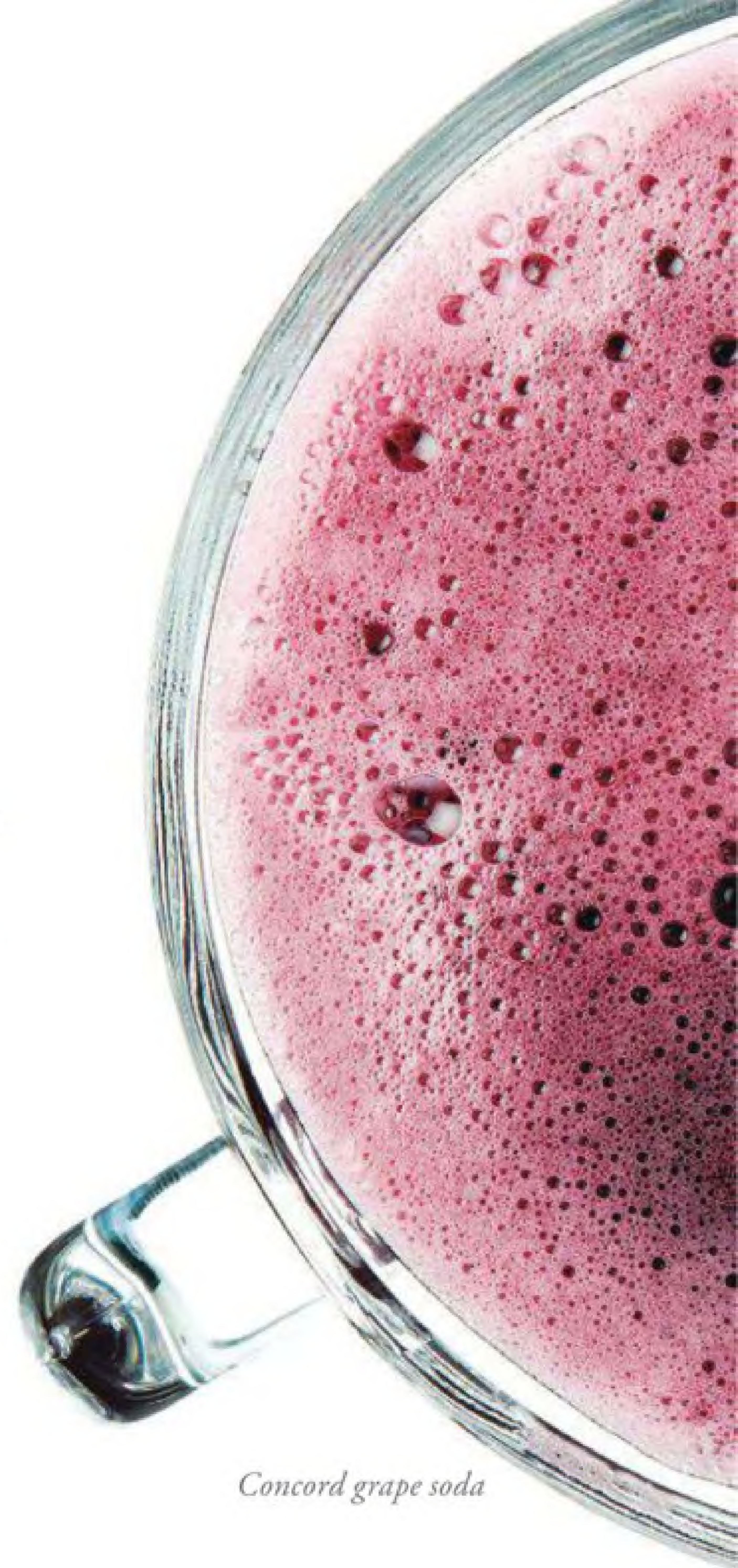
MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART

The recipe for this lacto-fermented mixed pickle (pictured opposite, at bottom right) is flexible: Use whatever vegetables happen to inspire you at the market, and feel free to tweak the seasonings. The benefit of using baby vegetables is not only aesthetic; because of their small size, they cure faster. Also because of their small size, and their sweet, mild flavor, we don't want to use too much salt in the brine: As a safeguard, we add just a bit of white wine vinegar. In a sterilized 2-qt. glass jar, combine ⅓ cup packed dill fronds, 2 tsp. whole black peppercorns, 12 cloves garlic, peeled, and 4 dried chiles de árbol. Place 1½ lb. mixed baby vegetables, such as carrots, zucchini, eggplants, radishes, asparagus, green beans, or pearl onions, in the jar over aromatics. Dissolve 6 tbsp. kosher or sea salt and 2 tbsp. white wine vinegar in 6 cups warm filtered water in a bowl to make a brine, and then pour over vegetables until covered. Pour any remaining brine into a resealable plastic sandwich bag, and place bag on top of vegetables to keep the vegetables submerged. Drape a large kitchen towel over the jar and let sit at room temperature (ideally 70°–75°) until vegetables have soured to your taste, about 3–4 weeks. Once pickles are cured, cover jar with lid, and refrigerate for up to 1 week.

## SPICY SAUERKRAUT

MAKES ABOUT 6 CUPS

All around the world, fermented cabbage has been a life sustaining bridge between the fall harvest and the first green shoots of spring. There's Eastern Europe's sauerkraut, Korea's kimchi, and Latin America's lightly fermented *curtido*. This spicy slaw (pictured opposite, at middle right) is a riff on that last condiment; it's sweet but not too funky, and perfect alongside grilled fish or as a condiment for tacos. To ferment cabbage, you have to thinly slice and massage it with salt to force the water out of the vegetable and create a brine. Within a few days, the acidifying activity of several strains of bacteria (including *Lactobacillus*) will start transforming it into this sweetly sour and spicy condiment. In a large bowl, combine 1 cup 1"-long matchstick carrots, 1 tbsp. kosher or sea salt, 1 tbsp. dried oregano, ½ tsp. crushed red chile flakes, 2 medium red onions, very thinly sliced lengthwise, and 1 large head (about 2½ lb.) green cabbage, cored and shredded, and massage ingredients with your hands until the cabbage begins to release its liquid. Transfer cabbage mixture to a sterilized 1-qt. plastic container with a large mouth, such as a cleaned plastic yogurt or sour cream container. Place a plate small enough to fit inside the container over the cabbage and place a heavy can or weight on top to keep cabbage mixture submerged in liquid. Drape a large kitchen towel over container and let sit at room temperature (ideally 70°–75°) for 3 days. Uncover and transfer cabbage mixture to a sterilized 1-qt. glass jar, cover with lid, and refrigerate for 1 day before serving. The sauerkraut will keep for 1 week stored in refrigerator.



Concord grape soda



**PREVENTING PROBLEMS** *The whims of nature—temperature, humidity, light, and more—can sometimes wreak havoc on fermentation projects. As a safeguard, you can control the kind of bacteria your ferments are exposed to by sterilizing jars and equipment by boiling them for 10 minutes and letting them air-dry. For more techniques on ensuring success while fermenting, see “Live Lessons,” page 99.*





*Spicy sauerkraut*



*Mixed baby vegetable pickles*



# SEASON OF REJOICING

In Crown Heights, Brooklyn, the holiday Sukkot is a celebration of life, community, and autumn's bounty

By Katie Robbins Photography by Ariana Lindquist









Clockwise from top left: Rabbi Yan-keel Pinson helps his granddaughter eat kreplach soup; fish balls in tomato sauce (see page 87 for recipe); revelers, between meals in a sukkah on Kingston Avenue; beef rib and meatball stew (see page 89 for recipe). Opposite page: challah knots (see page 87 for recipe).

**I**T'S A BRISK FALL evening on Kingston Avenue in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, a thoroughfare lined with kosher bakeries and restaurants. Though it is almost midnight, many stores are still open and several blocks have been cordoned off by the police. I am in a crowd of hundreds of women angling for a glimpse of the revelers before us: A sea of men in black and white, most wearing wide-brimmed hats, spinning, beads of sweat dripping from their beards as they match the frenetic pace of the music pumping from a stage in the street. I can't help but cheer a little. The joy is infectious.

The cause of the revelry is Sukkot, Judaism's seven-day celebration of thanksgiving. In Crown Heights, the center of the Lubavitch

Jewish community, it's referred to by its Hebrew name, *z'man simchateinu*, the Season of Our Rejoicing. Sukkot commemorates the Jews' 40-year trek through the desert following the Exodus from Egypt. It's also a harvest festival, a weeklong marathon of praying, studying, partying, and perhaps most important, feasting.

Growing up in a multifaith family, I didn't celebrate Sukkot. Even as I became more interested in my Jewish heritage after my father's death when I was 16, I still overlooked the holiday. Then a couple of years ago, my husband, Daniel Berson, and I visited his family in Denver for Sukkot, and I fell in love with it. All meals during the holiday are consumed in a sukkah (see "Harvest Ritual," page 82), a temporary hut built to honor those biblical desert meals. The first two nights and final evening of Sukkot are marked with lavish feasts; in the

KATIE ROBBINS is a writer living in Los Angeles. This is her first feature for *SAVEUR*.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ARIANA LINDQUIST; TODD COLEMAN; FACING PAGE: TODD COLEMAN







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## HARVEST RITUAL

The holiday of Sukkot is named for the sukkah, the booth that is central to this week-long festival. The structure pays homage to the temporary dwellings that Biblical Jews built during their years of wanderings after the exodus from Egypt. Sukkot is also a harvest holiday, and the hut resembles the shelters that farmers built in the fields during periods of round-the-clock work. When constructing a sukkah, Jewish law requires the following: The structure must have at least three walls; it must be large enough to fit a table; the roof must be made from organic materials that have been cut away from the earth; and the roof must have openings that reveal the stars, which symbolizes, among other things, people's dependence upon God. For the week, the sukkah becomes a home away from home—all meals are eaten there, and people are encouraged to sleep there as well. A sukkah can be large or small, lavish or humble. The materials used vary: Bukharian Jews from Central Asia have long used fabrics for the walls and willow for the roof; in the United States, it's common to see huts made with plywood and tarp, decorated with produce, plastic or real. In Israel, restaurants build sukkot (plural for sukkah) so customers can dine out during the holiday. There are other efforts to update the sukkah. Last year in New York City, Sukkah City, a design competition, invited architects to reimagine the structure. The winner was a sphere made from marsh grass, plywood, and twine. —Gabriella Gershenson

interim days, the huts become rest stops, their tables laid with finger foods and one-pot meals. At my first Sukkot dinner, we sat around a patio table bundled up in jackets, and savored our food beneath the stars. Like picnicking, eating our rice-stuffed acorn squash and warm apple crisp in the sukkah elevated the experience above the daily concerns of our lives.

After that, I wanted to learn more about the holiday: I remembered hearing that in Crown Heights, not far from where my dad was raised, there are massive Sukkot festivities. Thousands of Lubavitchers come to the neighborhood each year from as far away as the Middle East, Europe, and South America. It's considered a *mitzvah* (good deed) to open your sukkah to guests, so nearly every home in this roughly 100-square-block community has its own, some big enough to host hundreds. Crown Heights is the center of this sect of ultraorthodox Hasidic Jews, home to approximately 15,000 followers, a number that swells to 20,000 during Sukkot. The group is united by a devout observance of Jewish law—all keep kosher, avoid working on Sabbath, and follow dictates of dress and behavior. Yet because of the people's far-flung origins, the holiday table can be a wonderful pastiche of global Jewish foods. I wanted to try them all.

I knew that gaining access to this tight-knit group would be a challenge, so I called the Center for Kosher Culinary Arts, in Brooklyn. The director, Jesse Blonder, immediately said, "I've got the lady for you." Elka Pinson, one of the academy's founders and a real *macher* (big shot) in the Crown Heights community (she's also a psychologist and a part-time matchmaker), would be an ideal guide. After one conversation with Pinson, I knew I was in good hands. "Sukkot is the ultimate time," she told me, but I needed to be ready to celebrate "literally all night."

ON A MONDAY, I JOIN Pinson in her home kitchen. She is an energetic woman, and wears a colorful scarf that covers her hair. We are there to cook with her daughters, Bluma, 17, and Mushky, 22, and her mother, Rita Jacobs. Elka's refrigerator shelves are already groaning with salads and dips—garlicky eggplant spread and sesame *techina*—which the girls place in the family's sukkah for passing late-night revellers. There are poppy-seed cookies called *pirishkes*, a recipe from Elka's grandmother Goldie. Elka offers me a taste of another of Goldie's specialties, a nutty plum strudel.

There are no religiously prescribed dishes for Sukkot, but patterns emerge on the holiday's menus. "You need practical, durable food,"

says Elka. "It has to taste good, but it can't be too delicate, too fussy." The foods tend to alternate between warming dishes, perfect for meals in the chilly autumn air, and ones that can be eaten cold. Casseroles are popular, as are stews like *tzimmes*, made with root vegetables. *Tzimmes* is eaten throughout the year by Ashkenazi Jews (who have roots in Central and Eastern Europe), but its inclusion of fall produce—like carrots, parsnips, and plums—makes it a staple of this harvest holiday. Stuffed vegetables also represent the season's bounty, and Jacobs fills cabbage leaves with ground beef and rice. She tops them with a sweet-and-sour tomato sauce, whose candied flavor represents hopes for a sweet new year. Elka uses a similar sauce for her stew of savory fish balls.

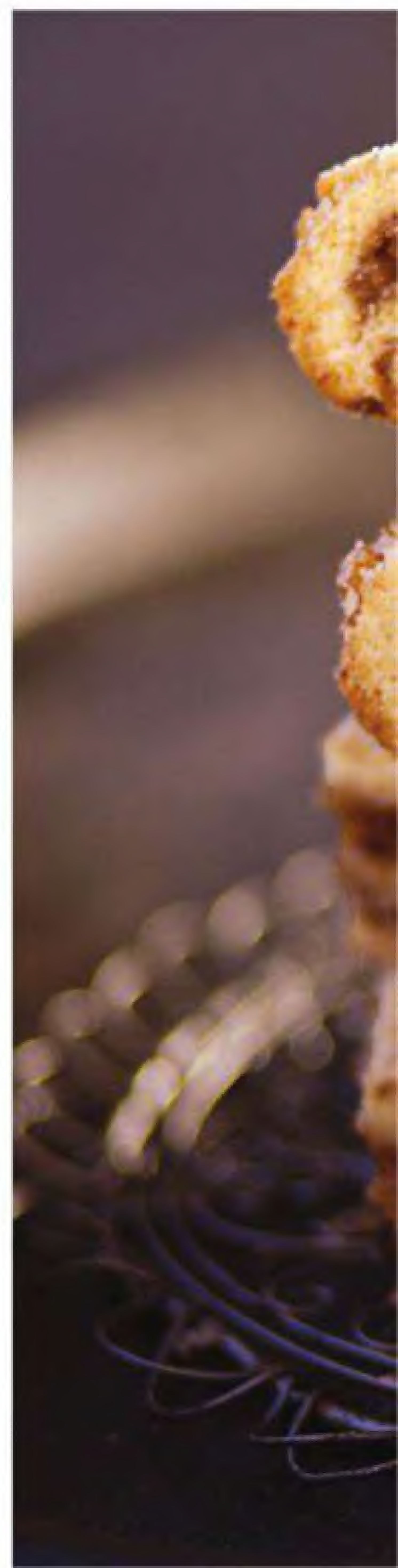
Elka and her mother also make *kreplach*, pasta filled with minced chicken, which is traditionally served in broth on Sukkot's final day. I watch as they roll the dough paper-thin and cut out small circles. Jacobs spoons the

## THE FOODS TEND TO BE WARMING DISHES, PERFECT FOR EATING IN THE CHILLY AUTUMN AIR

ground meat onto the rounds, giving each a twist so its sides cling together (see "Mastering the Fold," page 86). "Otherwise they spill out," says Jacobs, "and you get meat soup."

The foods of Judaism are inherently tied to the practice of the religion, so while the flavors are different from North Africa to the Americas, the meaning behind each meal is shared, and the similarities are inescapable. I discover this as Elka leads me from home to home, affording me the opportunity to taste Sukkot's delicious range. In many kitchens, I sample slow-cooked foods, the kind that get better as they sit untended on the hearth, a delicious and universal result of the restrictions on cooking during Sabbath.

At the home of Elka's friend Tanya Rogalsky, we try *t'fina pkaila*, a Tunisian stew of spinach, white beans, flanken (beef short rib), and *boulettes*—meatballs with plenty of cilantro, mint, and parsley—which Tanya serves over couscous with a side of chickpea salad. We also go to see Elka's friend Tiki Dean, who is Yemeni and, (continued on page 86)



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ARIANA LINDQUIST; TODD COLEMAN; ARIANA LINDQUIST; TODD COLEMAN





Clockwise from top left: Congregants pray at 770 Eastern Parkway, the main synagogue in Crown Heights, Brooklyn; kibbeh (lamb and bulgur wheat croquettes; see page 87 for recipe); Rabbi Mendel Schneerson holds the Four Species, which are used in special Sukkot blessings; plum strudel (see page 88 for recipe).





Clockwise from left:  
za'atar dip; tahini  
dip; mashed egg-  
plant spread; chickpea  
salad; cauliflower  
salad (see page 87 for  
recipes); pita bread.





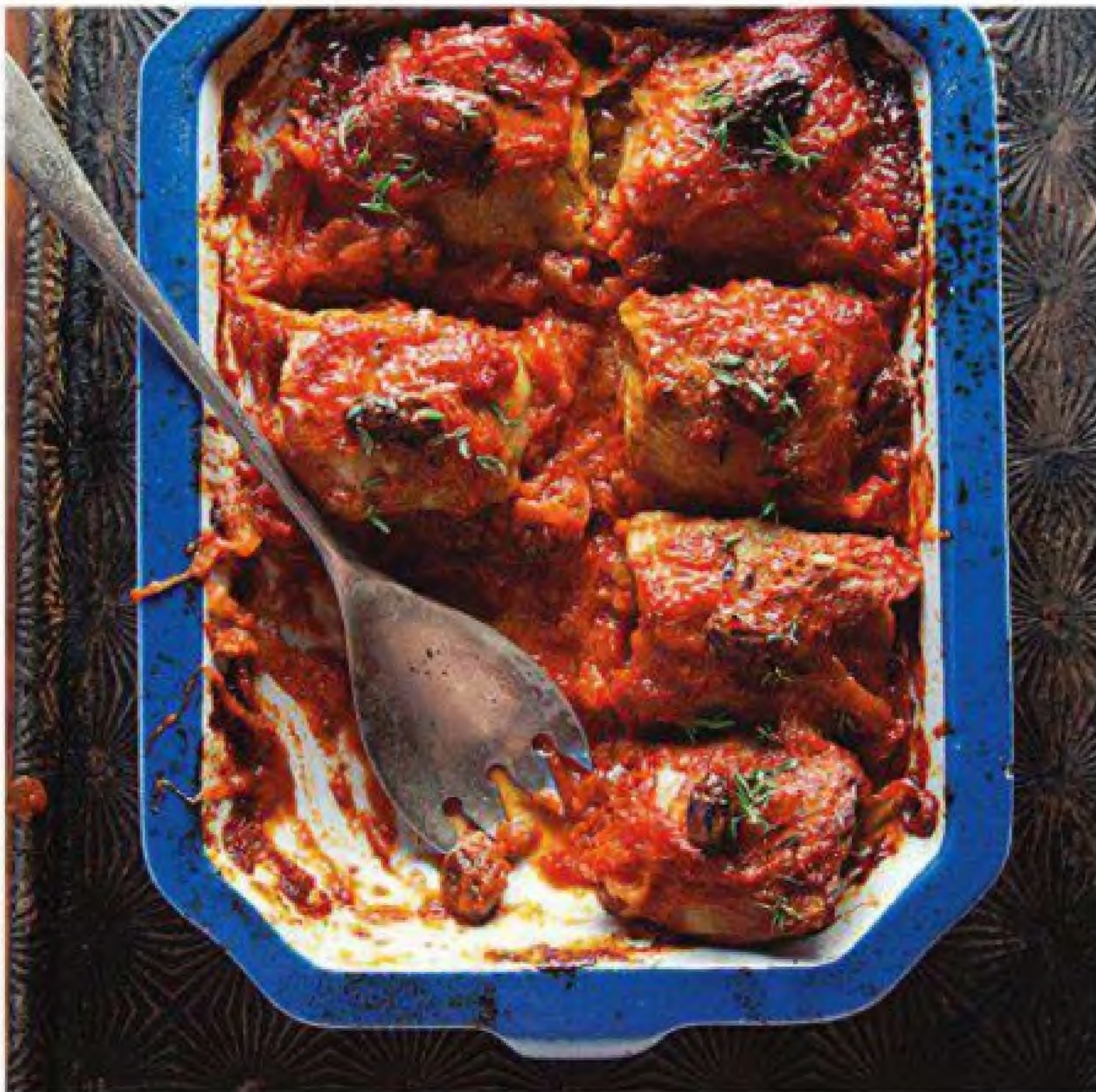






## MASTERING THE FOLD

Kreplach, the meat-filled dumplings served on Sukkot, can be finicky. When making them, keep these tips in mind: To prevent the kreplach from opening while being boiled, pinch the seams of the dough together tightly and refrigerate the dumplings on a well-floured plate—firmer dough is less likely to tear. Roll the dough as thin as possible to reduce cooking time and ensure a delicate dumpling. To fold the kreplach into the traditional triangle shape, we suggest the method below. ① On a floured surface, roll dough to a 1/8-inch thickness. Using a 3-inch round pastry cutter, cut dough into circles. Place 1 tbsp. filling in the center of each round. Moisten edges with water. ② Fold the edges of the dough toward the center to make three even sides. ③ Press tightly to seal. You should now have a tight, triangular dumpling. —Kellie Evans



Clockwise from top left: Joelle Cohn Wilshinsky and Rita Jacobs stuff cabbage at Elka Pinson's kitchen table; kreplach soup (see page 87 for recipe); Crown Heights resident Mendel Zirkind tests his creation; stuffed cabbage rolls (see page 87 for recipe).

(continued from page 82) unlike her Ashkenazi neighbors, embraces heat during this holiday of sweet foods. She makes a zesty za'atar dip and a fiery Yemeni *schug*, a spread of jalapeños, cilantro, and garlic. Dean also prepares cumin-scented ground beef that's wrapped in dough (a cousin of *kibbeh*, in which the filling is fried in a shell of bulgur wheat and lamb). The snacks and dips are perfect for a quick bite before returning to the streets to dance.

INSIDE THE SUKKAH, just big enough for two long tables and a mess of chairs, the bamboo-and-cedar-branch roof gives off an earthy fragrance. Elka has left me in the able hands of Gershon and Rochel Leah Eichorn, both masterful cooks. They're expecting 120 or so guests over the next several days, and tonight's feast is about to commence. We recite blessings over the wine and Rochel Leah's eggy

challah, which we then dip in honey.

The meal is passed around the table, family style. Salads make their way first—my favorite is crisp cauliflower with black olives and roasted peppers. For the soup course, we slurp bowls of chicken stock, which Gershon simmered for more than six hours, using plenty of feet and knee bones. Then we tuck into the main courses: minute steaks with ginger and apricot sauce, and chicken cutlets baked with garlic and lemon. They're served with savory noodle kugel, a satisfying, pepper-spiked casserole.

With dessert—marble and honey cakes—the men drink schnapps while humming wordless songs called *nigunim*. As we eat, more guests arrive: a group from Argentina, visitors from Australia. It's hard to tell who has been invited and who has shown up unannounced, but I'm learning that for the Lubavitchers, there's little distinction. We're all welcome to eat. 🐣



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ARIANA LINDQUIST; TODD COLEMAN; PREVIOUS PAGES: TODD COLEMAN; ILLUSTRATIONS: BRENDA WEAVER



## Baba Ghannouj

(Mashed Eggplant Spread)

SERVES 4

This eggplant spread (pictured on page 85) is made creamier with the addition of mayonnaise.

- 8 cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 2 medium eggplants
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup plus 2 tbsp. tahini
- 2 tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped parsley
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. paprika
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Place garlic and eggplants on a foil-lined baking sheet, and broil until tender and charred all over, about 10 minutes for garlic, and about 40 minutes for eggplant. Peel and seed eggplants, and mash flesh with peeled garlic, juice, tahini, mayonnaise, 2 tsp. parsley, the cumin, paprika, and salt and pepper in a bowl; sprinkle with remaining parsley.

## Cauliflower Salad

SERVES 4

This briny mix of cauliflower and olives (pictured on page 85) is a refreshing starter salad.

- 2 cups thinly sliced cauliflower
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped kalamata olives
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup chopped roasted red bell peppers
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup finely chopped scallions
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. marjoram, minced
- 1 tsp. oregano, minced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Toss all ingredients in a bowl; let sit for 20 minutes to blend flavors.

## Challot

(Challah Knots)

MAKES 12

These fluffy rolls (pictured on page 81) are perfect for any occasion.

- 4 tsp. active dry yeast
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup canola oil
- 4 egg yolks
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cups flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. kosher salt
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

**1** In a bowl, stir together yeast and 1 cup water heated to 115°; let sit until foamy, about 10 minutes. Whisk in sugar, oil, and egg yolks; add flour and salt. Stir to form dough, and then knead on a

work surface until smooth, about 8 minutes. Cover, and let sit until doubled in size, about 1 hour. Punch down dough, cover, and let sit for 45 minutes more.

**2** Heat oven to 350°. Form dough into twelve 10"-long ropes; tie each rope into a knot, tucking ends underneath. Transfer to a 9" x 13" baking pan; cover, and let sit for 30 minutes. Brush with egg; bake until browned, about 20 minutes.

## Fish Balls in Tomato Sauce

SERVES 4

A spicy tomato sauce injects bright flavor into these fish balls (pictured on page 80).

- 1 lb. ground cod or haddock
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup matzo meal
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup finely chopped parsley
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. ground coriander
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. ground ginger
- 5 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp. canola oil
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 cups fish or vegetable stock
- 1 cup whole, peeled canned tomatoes with juice, crushed
- 1 tsp. sugar, plus more to taste
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cayenne
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. ground allspice

**1** Stir together fish, matzo meal, 3 tbsp. parsley, cumin, coriander, ginger, 2 cloves garlic, egg white, and salt and pepper in a bowl. Form into thirty-two  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. balls; chill.

**2** Heat oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add remaining garlic; cook until fragrant, about 45 seconds. Add tomato paste; cook, stirring, until caramelized, about 3 minutes. Add stock, tomatoes, sugar, cayenne, chile flakes, allspice, salt, and pepper; bring to a boil. Add fish balls, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook until balls are cooked through, about 20 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining parsley.

## Holishkes

(Stuffed Cabbage Rolls)

SERVES 6-8

These cabbage rolls (pictured on page 86) are oven-braised until tender.

- Kosher salt, to taste
- 1 large head cabbage, cored
- 2 tbsp. canola oil
- 2 medium yellow onions,

thinly sliced, plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup

finely grated

- 2 ribs celery, finely chopped
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup tomato paste
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup raisins
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup honey
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 32-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes with juice, pureed
- 1 lb. ground chuck
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup uncooked long-grain white rice, soaked in hot water for 10 minutes, drained
- 3 tbsp. beef stock
- 1 tsp. paprika
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. cayenne
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

**1** Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat; add cabbage, and cook, pulling off each outer leaf with tongs as it becomes tender, about 2 minutes per leaf. Transfer leaves to a baking sheet and continue until you have 20 leaves.

**2** Heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat; add onions and celery, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until lightly caramelized, about 15 minutes. Add tomato paste, and cook, stirring, until lightly caramelized, about 2 minutes. Add raisins, honey, juice, and tomatoes, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, partially covered, until reduced, about 30 minutes.

**3** Heat oven to 350°. Combine remaining onion, chuck, rice, stock, paprika, cayenne, egg, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Place 2 tbsp. beef mixture in center of each cabbage leaf, fold sides over filling, and then roll up. Transfer rolls, seam side down, to bottom of a 9" x 13" glass baking dish. Pour tomato sauce over rolls; bake until filling is cooked through, about 45 minutes.

## Kibbeh

(Lamb and Bulgur Wheat Croquettes)

SERVES 6-8

These spiced croquettes (pictured on page 83) are a classic Middle Eastern snack.

FOR THE SHELL:

- 1 lb. ground lamb
- $1\frac{1}{4}$  cups fine bulgur wheat (No. 1), soaked in warm water for 10 minutes, drained
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. ground coriander
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

FOR THE FILLING:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 8 oz. ground chuck
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp. ground allspice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup lightly toasted pine nuts
- Canola oil, for frying

**1** Make the shell: Place lamb, bulgur wheat, salt, cumin, coriander, onion, and pepper in a food processor, and process until a smooth paste forms, about 30 seconds; set aside.

**2** Make the filling: Heat oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat; add garlic and onion, and cook, stirring, until soft, about 5 minutes. Add chuck, cinnamon, allspice, and salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until browned, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in pine nuts.

**3** Form 2 tbsp. shell mixture into a thin disk; place 1 tbsp. filling in center, and mold disk around filling, forming a football shape. Repeat with remaining shell mixture and filling.

**4** Pour oil to a depth of 2" in a 6-qt. Dutch oven; heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer reads 325°. Working in batches, fry croquettes until golden brown, about 5 minutes.

## Kreplach Soup

(Chicken Dumplings in Broth)

SERVES 6-8

For a step-by-step on how to shape these classic Jewish dumplings (pictured on page 86), see page 86.

- $2\frac{1}{4}$  cups flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. kosher salt
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 8 oz. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, minced
- 4 oz. chicken livers, minced
- 4 tsp. finely chopped fresh dill
- 1 tsp. hot paprika
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 1 carrot, cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ " cubes
- 1 rib celery, cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ " cubes

**1** Make the dough: Combine flour and salt in a bowl; add 1 tbsp. oil, eggs, and 1 tbsp. water and stir until dough forms. Transfer to a floured work surface; knead until smooth, about 6 minutes. Cover with plastic



wrap, and let rest for 1 hour.

**2** Make the filling: Heat remaining oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat; add garlic and onion, and cook, stirring, until soft, about 8 minutes. Add chicken and livers, and cook, stirring, until browned, about 8 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in dill, paprika, and salt and pepper.

**3** Halve dough; use a rolling pin to roll each half until  $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick. Use a 3" round cutter to cut out rounds of dough. Use your finger to moisten edge of each round with water and place 1 tbsp. filling in center; press edges together over filling. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add dumplings; simmer until cooked through, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, bring broth, carrots, and celery to a boil in a 2-qt. saucepan; season with salt; set aside. Divide dumplings among serving bowls and ladle hot broth and vegetables over the top of dumplings.

### Lekach

(Honey-Spice Cake)

SERVES 10-12

Perfumed with honey and citrus, this spiced cake (pictured at right) is classic at Jewish holiday tables.

- Butter, for greasing pan
- 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  cups flour, plus more for pan
- 1 tbsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp. ground allspice
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 6 eggs, separated
- 1 cup canola oil
- 1 cup honey
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh orange juice
- 2 tbsp. orange zest
- 2 tbsp. Grand Marnier
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cups confectioners' sugar

**1** Heat oven to 325°. Grease and flour a 4-qt. Bundt pan; set aside. Whisk together flour, cinnamon, allspice, ginger, baking powder and soda, and salt in a bowl; set aside. Beat  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar and egg yolks in a bowl on medium-high speed of a mixer until tripled in volume, about 4 minutes. Stir in oil, honey, 2 tbsp. juice, zest, and Grand Marnier. Add dry ingredients; stir until just combined.

**2** Beat egg whites in a bowl on high speed of a mixer until soft peaks form. Add remaining sugar; beat until stiff peaks form. Fold whites into batter. Pour into prepared pan;

smooth top. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the middle of cake comes out clean, about 60 minutes. Let cool and invert onto a serving plate. Whisk remaining juice with confectioners' sugar; drizzle over cake.

### Lokshen Kugel

(Savory Noodle Kugel)

SERVES 8-10

Typically a sweet casserole, this noodle kugel (pictured below) is savory, flavored with garlic and onions.

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cups (12 oz.) sour cream
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  cups (12 oz.) cottage cheese
- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 8 oz. wide egg noodles



Clockwise from top left: root-vegetable stew; poppy seed-honey cookies; savory noodle kugel; honey-spice cake.

- Ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced

Heat oven to 350°. Whisk sour cream, cottage cheese, 6 tbsp. butter, and eggs in a bowl; set aside. Bring a 4-qt. pot of salted water to a boil; cook noodles until al dente. Drain; stir into cheese mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Heat remaining butter in a 12" cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and onions; cook, stirring, until lightly caramelized, about 8 minutes. Stir in noodles, and bake until browned, 35-40 minutes.

### Pirishkes

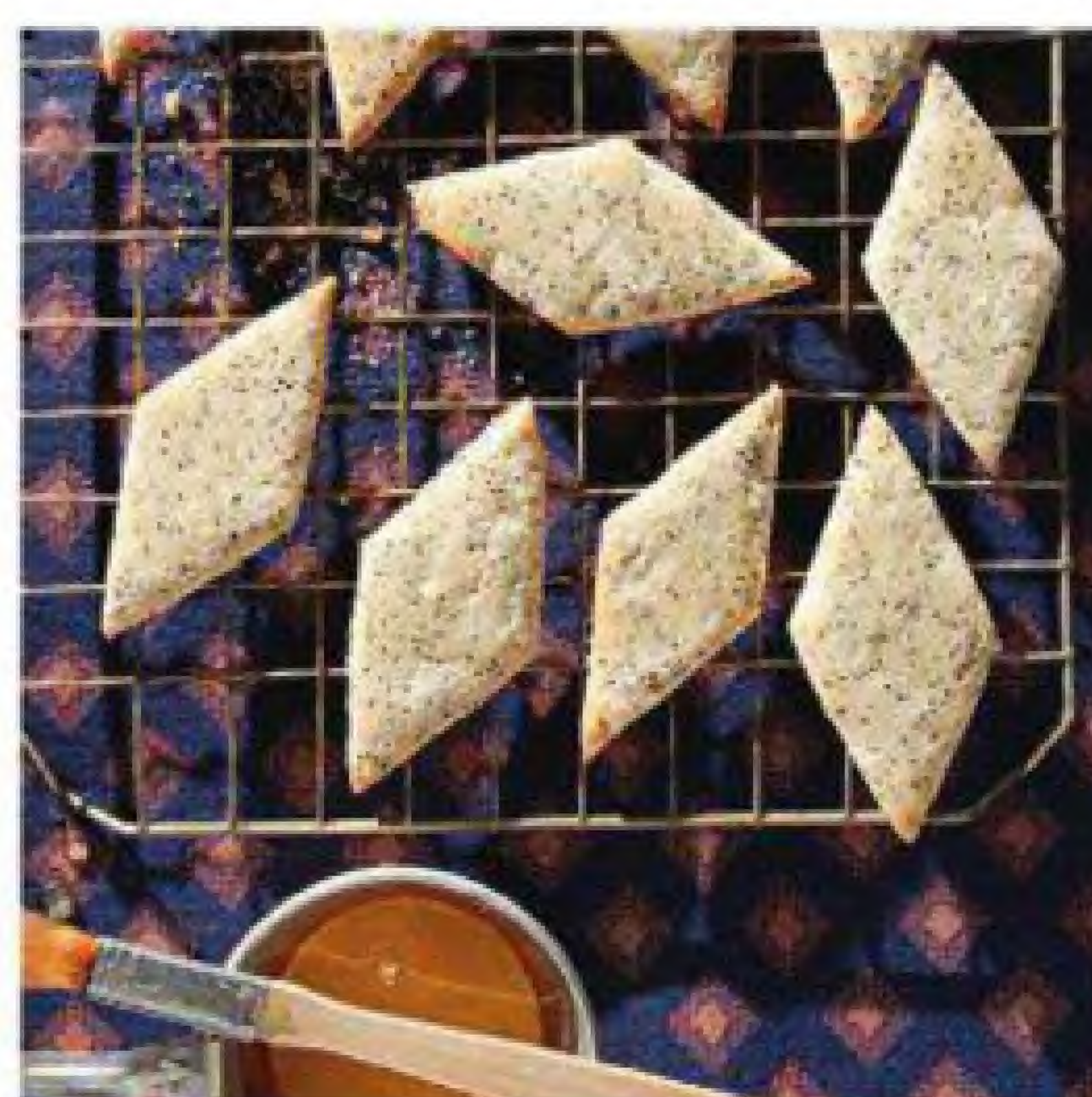
(Poppy Seed-Honey Cookies)

MAKES ABOUT 5 $\frac{1}{2}$  DOZEN

These crunchy cookies (pictured below) are drenched in warm honey.

- 3 cups flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup poppy seeds
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar
- 8 tbsp. butter, softened
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup honey

Heat oven to 350°. Whisk flour, poppy seeds, baking powder, and salt in a bowl; set aside. Beat sugar, butter, and vanilla in a bowl with a hand mixer until pale and fluffy.



nuts for a gooey, crumbly cake.

- 2 cups flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter, cut into  $\frac{1}{2}$ " cubes and chilled
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. kosher salt
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup walnuts
- 1 12-oz. jar plum preserves

**1** Process flour,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar, butter, baking powder, and salt in a food processor until pea-size crumbles form. Add 2 eggs and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup ice-cold water; pulse until dough forms. Form into a disk; wrap; chill for 1 hour. Finely chop remaining sugar and walnuts in a food processor; Set aside. Puree preserves in processor.

**2** Heat oven to 375°. Cut dough into thirds; roll each into an 11" x 7" rectangle; line an 11" x 7" baking dish with a rectangle. Spread over half the preserves; sprinkle with one-third walnuts. Top with second rectangle; spread over remaining preserves and half remaining walnuts. Top with last rectangle, and prick with tines of a fork. Brush with remaining egg; sprinkle with remaining walnuts. Bake until golden, 25-30 minutes.

### Salade de Pois Chiches

(Chickpea Salad)

SERVES 6

This salad (pictured on page 85) is great served with roasted chicken.

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. kosher salt
- 4 cloves garlic
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup finely chopped parsley
- 3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. cayenne
- 2 15-oz. can chickpeas, rinsed
- 2 large shallots, chopped
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Using a knife, scrape and mash salt and garlic into a smooth paste; transfer to bowl and stir in oil, parsley, juice, cumin, cayenne, chickpeas, shallots, and pepper.

### Techina

(Tahini Dip)

SERVES 4

Brightened with lemon and garlic, tahini becomes a bright, creamy dip (pictured on page 84).

- 1 cup tahini
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fresh lemon juice
- 6 cloves garlic, minced

### Plum Strudel

SERVES 8-12

This satisfying pastry (pictured on page 83) layers preserves and wal-



- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
 ¼ tsp. dried oregano  
 1 tomato, cored and minced  
 ½ small yellow onion, minced

Puree tahini, lemon juice, garlic, salt, pepper, and ¼ cup water in a food processor; transfer to a plate. Mix oregano, tomato, and onion in a bowl; spoon over dip.

### T'fina Pkaila

(Beef Rib and Meatball Stew)

SERVES 6-8

This stew (pictured on page 80) is packed with flavor from tender beef spare ribs, meatballs, and spinach.

#### FOR THE MEATBALLS:

- 2 tbsp. olive oil  
 1 small yellow onion, minced  
 1 lb. ground chuck  
 1 tbsp. ground cumin  
 1 tbsp. ground black pepper  
 1 tbsp. finely chopped cilantro  
 1 tbsp. finely chopped parsley  
 2¼ tsp. kosher salt  
 1½ tsp. paprika  
 ¾ tsp. ground cinnamon  
 1 egg, lightly beaten

#### FOR THE SOUP:

- ¼ cup olive oil

- 1 lb. beef flanken-cut short ribs  
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
 1 large yellow onion, minced  
 5 cups beef stock  
 6 oz. spinach leaves, chopped  
 1 16-oz. can white kidney beans, rinsed and drained

**1** Make the meatballs: Heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onions; cook, stirring, until soft, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer onions to a bowl; stir in chuck, cumin, pepper, cilantro, parsley, salt, paprika, cinnamon, and egg. Form mixture into about forty 1-oz. balls. Return saucepan and oil to medium-high heat; add meatballs, and cook, turning, until browned all over, about 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate and set aside.

**2** Make the soup: Return saucepan to medium-high heat and add oil; season ribs with salt and pepper. Working in batches, add ribs, and cook, turning, until browned on all sides, about 8 minutes. Transfer ribs to a plate and set aside. Add garlic and onions to pan, and cook, stir-

ring, until lightly caramelized, about 5 minutes. Return ribs to pan along with stock, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and cook until beef is just tender, about 1 hour. Add meatballs, and cook until tender, about 8 minutes. Add spinach and beans, and cook, until spinach and beans are tender, about 4 minutes more.

### Tzimmes

(Root Vegetable Stew)

SERVES 6-8

Sweetened with honey and prunes, this stew (pictured on page 88) is an autumn holiday staple.

- 3 tbsp. olive oil  
 2 lb. beef chuck, cut into 1½" cubes  
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
 1½ tsp. ground cinnamon  
 ½ tsp. ground ginger  
 ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg  
 2 large yellow onions, minced  
 4 cups beef stock  
 2 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1½" cubes  
 8 oz. pitted prunes, halved  
 2 carrots, cut into 1½" lengths  
 1 tbsp. honey (optional)  
 1 tbsp. finely chopped parsley

**1** Heat oil in a 6-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high heat; season beef with salt and pepper. Working in batches, add beef to pot, and cook, turning, until browned all over, about 8 minutes; transfer to a plate and set aside. Add cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and onions, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until soft, about 5 minutes. Return beef to pot along with stock, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, covered partially, until beef is barely tender, about 1 hour.

**2** Add potatoes, prunes, and carrots; cook, uncovered, until tender, about 1 hour. Remove from heat, stir in honey, and sprinkle with parsley.

### Za'atar Dip

SERVES 8-10

Za'atar flavors this simple cilantro-and-garlic dip (pictured on page 84).

- ½ cup olive oil  
 3 tbsp. za'atar (see page 106)  
 6 cloves garlic, minced  
 1 bunch cilantro, stemmed  
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Puree oil, za'atar, garlic, cilantro, salt, and pepper in a food processor.

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# The Soft Approach

A COOK VENTURES PAST THE POINT OF AL DENTE

I blame Julia Child for our national aversion to soft vegetables. It wasn't until she started urging American cooks—in her books and on her PBS series, *The French Chef*—to blanch everything from green beans to kale and then shock them in cold water, that a bright green color and firm texture were programmed in our minds as the platonic ideal. Well, I grew up on soggy broccoli rabe, and that's still my favorite way to eat it. Granted, broccoli rabe that's cooked just beyond its bright green state yet is still unpalatably bitter is a foul punishment. But something happens if you keep cooking it past that point. Eventually it becomes mellow, unctuous—creamy, even—the stems melting away in the mouth as ethereally as the florets. ∞ That was how my grandmother, who hailed from the Abruzzi region of Italy, prepared

BY LESLEY PORCELLI PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD COLEMAN

Slow-cooked broccoli rabe flavored with crushed red chiles and garlic (see page 94 for a recipe).

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## You've got to really push the envelope, push through the

it, but early on I noticed that broccoli rabe like my nonna's was nowhere to be found outside our home. In restaurants and on cooking shows, it was prepared one way: blanched, then sautéed. And served one way: safely on the firm side of tender. When I got a kitchen of my own and started collecting cookbooks, I realized that the most respected food authorities were opposed to certain long-cooked vegetables. In the vegetable volume of Time-Life's *The Good Cook* series (1979), the editors advised to "keep the cooking time brief" for all crucifers lest they "become sulfurous." Yet I knew full well that Nonna's broccoli rabe—and my own—never had that offensive smell. And then there was food science writer Harold McGee, whose *On Food and Cooking* (Scribner, 1984) proclaimed, "Prolonged cooking makes members of the onion family more sweet and mellow, but the cabbage family gets more overbearing and unpleasant." Full stop.

McGee explained the chemistry behind that cabbagey stink, but he failed to account for the sweetness that comes around if you brave through that stage and keep on cooking. But, I thought, what about the greens that simmer to sweetness for hours in kitchens across the American South? Or the many Middle Eastern dishes of vegetables rendered luscious via long stewing? None of my heroes acknowledged these foods; none of them, it seemed, had ever left the pan on the heat for too long and made a happy discovery. What did they serve, I wondered, in the

heart of winter, when everything else on the plate was roasted, and a bit of squishy comfort was warranted?

It was one thing to note this omission in cookbooks, but another thing entirely to find that among my peers I was nearly alone in thinking there were more options than just al dente. I discovered as much in culinary school, on day one of Vegetable Cookery. Chef Ted, an imposing Doric column of a man, was to lead the lecture. We walked into our kitchen classroom that day to find several pots of water and various vegetables already bubbling on the stove. Without a word, Chef Ted pulled some green beans from a pot and distributed them for us to sample.

"Is that cooked?" he asked the first student who bit into it. "Yes," came the answer. He looked at another student. "What do *you* think?" Again came the answer: yes. Then he looked at me. I took the bean, bright green and firm, and bit down. And there—a telltale squeak between my teeth that I didn't like. "Um, no?" I said. The rest of the class, save one other person, agreed that these beans were perfectly cooked.

"You," said Chef Ted, pointing to me, "and you," to the other who had sided with me, "are the only two who know what a cooked vegetable should taste like." When I asked Chef Ted about it later, he said, "You find in big cities, or with people who think they're more educated about gastronomy, that they'll think crunchy vegetables are properly cooked. It's the influence of French nouvelle cuisine; it was a reaction against classical French not to overcook vegetables. Like anything else that's good, it got misinterpreted in the wrong hands."

Still, "crisp-tender" was the institution, and so we fussed over ice baths

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## ust-cooked stage, and you arrive at that sweet complexity

and obsessed over “setting the color.” I became aware of the divide in my thinking in the kitchen: One kind of cooking was restaurant food, and then there was how I preferred to cook at home.

Until the day I stumbled on a dissenting voice, a plea on behalf of the overcooked; unsurprisingly, it came from an Italian, Marcella Hazan. Her cookbooks are full of recipes for vegetables rendered soft and yielding in slow-simmering water–olive oil baths, the cooking liquid itself as delectable as a broth. Nothing complements roast chicken like her braised artichokes and leeks, olive green and silky; her braised celery stalks reveal a luxuriousness you wouldn’t expect from celery. I was certain there must be scientific corroboration for what Hazan and generations of cooks before her knew based on experience at the stove. I phoned Dr. Keith Harris, assistant professor of food science at North Carolina State University, to see if he could shed light on that elusive vegetal sweetness that comes with long cooking. “It’s true that when vegetables, especially cruciferous vegetables, are cooked, the damage to the plant’s tissue brings about reactions between compounds that are usually kept separate,” he said—hence the sulfuric aroma. But, he emphasized, if you continue to cook these foods, “at a certain point the aroma will dissipate, and you’ll end up with the flavor compounds left in the plant, including its sugars—especially if it’s cooked and served in a way that the sugars aren’t poured out with the cooking water.”

In the last few years, I’ve been delighted to detect signs of rebellion among Hazan’s culinary heirs. When I was working at a culinary magazine, I walked into the test kitchen one day to find one of the food editors

serving green beans cooked in water and olive oil long enough that you could practically bite through them with your tongue alone. And on the menu at Pizzeria Mozza in Los Angeles, I spied a savory pie topped with “long-cooked broccoli” soft enough to spread like butter.

When I talked to Mozza’s chef and co-owner, Nancy Silverton, it was like finding a long-lost family member. “You’ve got to really push the envelope, push through the just-cooked stage, and you arrive at that sweet complexity again,” she said. “When I was at Campanile in the ’80s, we were doing the California thing of barely cooking baby vegetables; we were so proud of their purity. But the Italians who visited us pooh-poohed it, because they know that more mature vegetables actually have more flavor. They would push us to go for longer cooking times. True Italians have no tolerance for crunchy vegetables.”

So there it was: The more I searched, the closer I came to my roots. Still, my own family remains divided on the issue. My husband and son are happiest on the days that I blanch and then quick-sauté the broccoli rabe with olive oil, chile flakes, and garlic. But there are times when I must honor where I came from. I remember the first time I brought a bowl of long-braised broccoli rabe to a gathering of my extended family after both my grandparents had died. “Mmmm,” my uncle smiled, after tasting a forkful. “This is just how Dad liked it.”

**From left: braised celery and tomato; Lebanese-style green beans with chickpeas in olive oil; Indian-style carrots with mustard seeds; and olive oil-braised vegetables (see page 94 for recipes).**



### Carrot Kari

(Indian-Style Carrots With Mustard Seeds)

SERVES 4-6

Inspired by a recipe in Julie Sahni's *Indian Regional Classics* (Ten Speed Press, 2001), these carrots (pictured on page 93) are stewed long enough to concentrate their sweetness; mustard seeds, curry leaves, and chiles provide warm and earthy notes.

- 2 tbsp. canola oil
- 1 tsp. brown mustard seeds
- 2 tsp. yellow split peas (see page 106), lightly crushed
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. paprika
- 24 fresh or dried curry leaves (optional; see page 106)
- 2 dried chiles de árbol, stemmed and torn into small pieces
- $1\frac{1}{4}$  lb. small to medium carrots, thinly sliced crosswise
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Cooked basmati rice, for serving

**1** Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mustard seeds, cover skillet with lid, and cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until the seeds stop popping, about 30 seconds.

**2** Remove the lid and stir in the peas, turmeric, paprika, curry leaves, and chiles, and cook, stirring often, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the carrots along with 1 cup water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook, covered and stirring occasionally, until carrots are very soft, about 20 minutes.

**3** Uncover the pan, raise the heat to high, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the excess liquid evaporates, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve hot or at room temperature with basmati rice.

### Cime di Rapa Fritte

(Slow-Cooked Broccoli Rabe)

SERVES 4-6

Notoriously bitter and tough, broccoli rabe becomes mellow and supple when cooked slowly in a bath of water and olive oil. Simply seasoned with garlic and chile flakes, this Italian home-cooking classic (pictured on page 90) is true comfort food.

- $1\frac{1}{4}$  cups olive oil
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 12 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

$2\frac{1}{4}$  lb. broccoli rabe, thick stems removed, cut into 2" pieces

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**1** Heat  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup oil, chile flakes, and 6 cloves garlic in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat, and cook, stirring occasionally, until garlic is lightly browned, about 2 minutes. Add broccoli rabe and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water, reduce heat to medium-low, and cover skillet; cook, stirring occasionally, until very soft, about 1 hour and 15 minutes.

**2** Meanwhile, place remaining oil and garlic in a 1-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until garlic is crisp and golden, about 5 minutes. Drain, and set garlic chips aside.

**3** To serve, season broccoli rabe with salt and pepper and top with reserved garlic chips.

### Loubieh Wa Hommus Bi-Ziet

(Lebanese-Style Green Beans With Chickpeas in Olive Oil)

SERVES 4-6

Slow-cooked vegetable dishes like this one, a cumin- and paprika-spiced stew of beans and tomatoes (pictured on page 92), are a standby in many parts of the Middle East. Here, tomatoes and green beans release some of their flavor into the cooking liquid, creating a rich broth.

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil
- 2 tsp. cumin seeds
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 tbsp. paprika
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  lb. green beans, strings removed
- 1 28-oz. can whole, peeled tomatoes with juice, crushed by hand
- 1 15-oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed

**1** Heat the oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat; add cumin seeds and cook, stirring often, until fragrant, about 1 minute.

**2** Add the garlic and onion, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring often, until soft and lightly browned, about 12 minutes.

**3** Add the tomato paste and paprika,

and cook, stirring occasionally, until tomato paste is lightly caramelized, about 2 minutes. Add the green beans, tomatoes, chickpeas, and 3 cups water, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, and cook, partially covered, stirring occasionally, until very tender, about 1 hour. Let sit for at least 15 minutes before serving to allow the flavors to meld.

### Olive Oil-Braised Vegetables

SERVES 4-6

Based on a recipe from Traci Des Jardins, chef and co-owner of Jardinière in San Francisco, this flavorful mix of broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini, and potatoes (pictured on page 93) is braised in olive oil that's been infused with rosemary, chile flakes, lemon, and anchovies.

- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. anchovy paste
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 6 sun-dried tomatoes, thinly sliced lengthwise
- 6 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed with the side of a knife
- 6 sprigs rosemary
- 1 lemon, ends trimmed, thinly sliced crosswise, seeds removed
- 1 large zucchini, cut diagonally into  $1\frac{1}{2}$ "-long pieces
- 1 lb. baby Yukon Gold or new potatoes
- 1 medium head broccoli, cut into florets, stalk cut into large pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$  medium head cauliflower, cut into florets, stalk cut into large pieces
- 2 tbsp. finely chopped parsley
- 2 sprigs marjoram, stems removed
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**1** Put the olive oil, anchovy paste, chile flakes, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, rosemary, and lemon slices in a 6-qt. Dutch oven. Place over medium-high heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and the garlic and the lemon slices are lightly browned, about 5 minutes.

**2** Add the zucchini in a single layer and cook, without stirring, until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Flip the zucchini, and cook for 5 minutes more.

**3** Add the potatoes, broccoli, and cauliflower to the pot and stir once or twice to coat in oil. Cook, cov-

ered, without stirring, until the vegetables begin to brown and soften, about 30 minutes.

**4** Stir vegetables gently, replace the lid, and reduce the heat to medium-low; cook until the vegetables are very soft and tender, about 60 minutes more.

**5** Remove the vegetables from the heat, and stir in parsley and marjoram. Season with salt and pepper.

### Sedano e Pomodori Brasati

(Braised Celery and Tomato)

SERVES 4-6

This recipe, adapted from one in Marcella Hazan's *Essentials of Classic Italian Cooking* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), produces results that are surprising from celery: creamy, sweet, luscious. The stalks' stringy fibers, often removed before cooking, here act as a brace to help the vegetable (pictured on page 92) keep its shape through a long simmer.

- 3 oz. pancetta, cut into 1" matchsticks
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, cut in half, cored, and very thinly sliced
- 2 lb. celery stalks, trimmed and cut diagonally into 2" lengths
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup whole, peeled canned tomatoes with juice, crushed by hand
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**1** Put pancetta in a 6-qt. saucepan and place over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until its fat renders, about 12 minutes. (If the pancetta begins to brown too fast, reduce the heat to medium-low.) Using a slotted spoon, transfer the pancetta to paper towels to drain, and set aside.

**2** Add the olive oil to the pan, and return to medium-high heat. Add the onion, and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and light brown, about 10 minutes. Add the celery, tomatoes, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water, and season with salt and pepper. Cover pan with lid, and cook, stirring occasionally, until celery is very tender, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

**3** Divide the celery with its juices between serving bowls, and sprinkle with the reserved pancetta. Serve hot or at room temperature.



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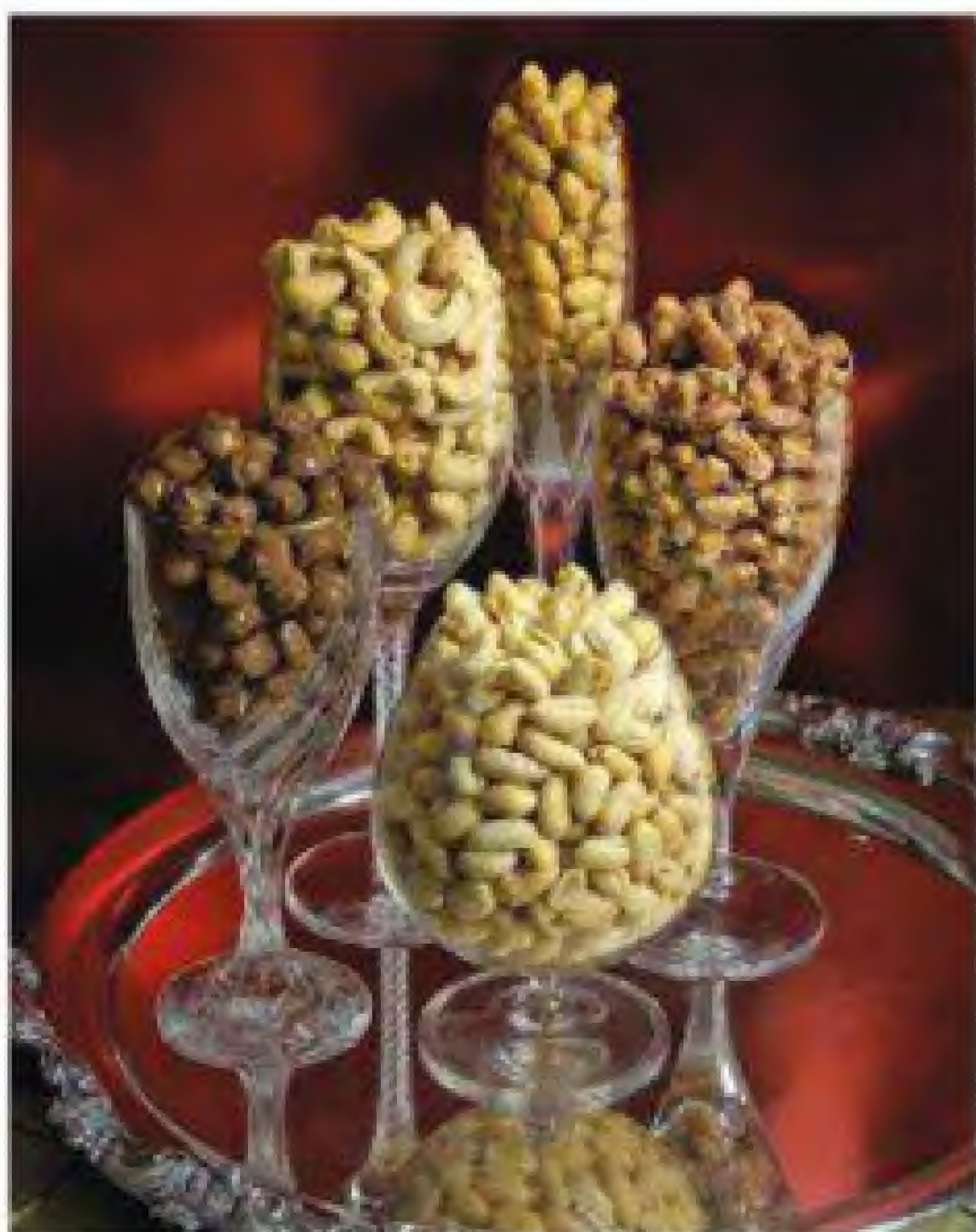
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IN THE SAVEUR

## KITCHEN

Discoveries and Techniques From Our Favorite Kitchen in the House » Edited by Todd Coleman

## GETTING CULTURED

As we put together this issue's story on fermented foods ("Preserving Plenty," page 68), it took me right back to my mom's kitchen, circa 1974. Mom and I loved our Salton yogurt maker, but I've since learned that making yogurt doesn't require any special equipment. I start by bringing six cups of milk to a boil, at which point I transfer the hot milk to a bowl to cool slightly. Once the temperature is down to 90 degrees, I briskly whisk in a tablespoon of plain, active yogurt, aka a starter culture. Then I just pour it into a jar and set it aside in a warm place for six to eight hours. Easy.

I have learned, though, that the bacteria in the starter culture can be fussy when it comes to temperature. Boiling the milk kills other microorganisms that can cause spoilage, but you'll also kill the starter culture if you add it while the milk's still too hot, and if the milk's much cooler than 90 degrees at that point it will sour before it sets. It also took a little experimentation to find the right warm place in which to let those hungry bacteria get down to the business of eating sugars in the milk and producing the lactic acid that will, ultimately, take the pH level down to the point where the milk will thicken into yogurt. Setting my jar of inoculated milk on a sunny windowsill resulted in a fail, but when I set it in the same spot wrapped in a thick towel, the towel provided just the right amount of insulation, though it took more like 12 hours to make yogurt. When I had a convection oven that held at 100 degrees, that worked great, but most ovens won't go below 180. I've gotten good results heating the oven to 180 and turning it off as soon as I put the milk inside; the oven holds enough heat to get the job done (again, it takes a few hours longer). I've also had luck setting the jar outside in direct sunlight on a hot day, or in a nest of blankets on top of a heating pad set on medium heat. Whatever I rig up, I always strain the yogurt through cheesecloth once it's set, which produces a texture so dense and luscious I can't imagine going back to the store-bought stuff. —*Marne Setton*





# Live Lessons

**W**E LEARN NEW things every day in the *SAVEUR* kitchen, but we got a crash course in the science—and surprises—of live-cultured foods as we developed the recipes for the story about fermentation on page 68. Our kitchen turned into a veritable laboratory of culinary experiments. Much of it was new to us; our recent previous pickling projects had relied on vinegar or some other acidic element, which inhibits bacterial growth. With these foods, however, bacterial growth was the point, and it took us awhile to figure out how to control the conditions so that only good bacteria formed. Our initial test of the Latin American-inspired spicy sauerkraut, for example, was a moldy mess. And when we opened our first jar of baby vegetables, it erupted with white foam. Fortunately, we were able to turn to a few trusted sources: Sandor Katz's *Wild Fermentation* (Chelsea Green, 2003), Sally Fallon's *Nourishing Traditions* (New Trends, 1999), and an excellent USDA guide called "The Art of Fermentation" (go to [usda.gov](http://usda.gov) and enter the keyword *fermentation* in the search box). But it was through good old-fashioned trial and error that we picked up some of our most valuable tips. At right, some things to consider when doing your own fermenting using the recipes starting on page 72. —Kellie Evans



- ① When pickling, there are controls you can introduce to ensure that your brine encourages the microorganisms you want and inhibits the kind you don't. Using the right amount of salt is critical: Too little makes a weak brine that permits growth of microbes that cause spoilage; too much inhibits the lactic acid bacteria that do the fermenting. As a safeguard, we added white distilled vinegar—just one tablespoon for every three cups of water—to ensure that bad bacteria were held in check while good bacteria got the fermentation going. We used it in our baby vegetable pickles, which we didn't want to salt too heavily. We also used whey (which you can obtain at home by draining the liquid off active yogurt) in certain recipes, like the beets, to speed fermentation and ensure consistent results.



- ④ The vessels you need for fermenting are probably in your kitchen already. We found that leftover one-quart plastic yogurt containers were great for brining the spicy sauerkraut. Weighed down with a saucer and a canned good or bottle, the sauerkraut was fully submerged in brine. In our glass jars, which have smaller mouths, we used a sandwich-size plastic bag filled with extra brine as a weight. If the bag springs a leak, there's no harm in adding a bit more brine to the pickles. The point is to make sure anything you're fermenting is completely submerged: The brine keeps out air and seals ingredients off from yeasts and molds that will consume lactic acid, lower the brine's acidity, and cause spoilage.



- ② Finding—and maintaining—the right temperature is crucial. This affects the rate at which beneficial microorganisms grow: The warmer it is, the more productive your ferment will be. The *SAVEUR* kitchen is highly air-conditioned, and so we found that trying to ferment anything on our countertops was too much of a gamble; some of the pickles just flat-out refused to ferment. A windowsill with a fair amount of sunlight, however, jump-started our Indian lime pickles and was a warm enough spot for our red wine vinegar. The cabinets nearest our sink pipes and dishwashers hit the fermentation sweet spot of around 65 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit, too. These spots worked particularly well for our spicy sauerkraut, sour pickles, and mixed baby vegetables.



- ⑤ There's such a thing as too much fizz, as we learned while making our homemade Concord grape soda. We tailored the recipe to fit the one-liter seltzer bottles we always have on hand in the kitchen. At first we left three inches of headroom at the top of the bottle, anticipating the liquid expanding as the yeast fermented the grapes. Big mistake: The extra space allowed for too much carbonation, creating a geyserlike spritz upon opening. Matt Rye from the store Adventures in Homebrewing, in Taylor, Michigan, advised us to fill to within about an inch of the top. That allowed for a bit more carbonation than you'd find in a commercial soda, but not so much that we had to worry about exploding bottles.



- ③ Many recipes call for keeping fermentation projects in the dark. For our pickles, soda, and yogurt, light or lack of it didn't seem to matter one bit. But our vinegar did far better when covered with a dark cloth, and better still when we kept it, still covered, near a sunny window, so it could benefit from the sun's heat. The culture known as mother of vinegar (or *Mycoderma aceti*), a rubbery blob composed of acid-producing bacteria and yeasts that floats in the fermenting vinegar, is something of a recluse: She prefers the dark, does not like to be jostled or handled, and does not like to be fed with new wine any more than once every two weeks. And while she works best in a warm environment, if the temperature rises much above 80 degrees Fahrenheit, she'll go dormant.



- ⑥ When fermenting your own foods, you should always start off with the freshest and purest raw ingredients. Processed or pasteurized ingredients can interfere with the bacterial growth you're trying to encourage. Use sea salt or kosher salt instead of iodized table salt, which can lend an unpleasant chemical taste. Use filtered or purified water free of the additives found in tap water, which can negatively impact the chemistry of the controlled environment you want to create. Chlorine, for example, which is used to treat most public water supplies in the United States, can delay fermentation. Boiling tap water for at least two minutes will vaporize the chlorine (just be sure to let the water cool completely before using it).



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## A Cut Above

The recipe on page 89 for *t'fina pkalia*, the Tunisian Jewish beef, spinach, and white bean stew, calls for flanken-cut beef short ribs. *Flanken* means "flank" in German and in Yiddish, and it refers to short ribs (the ribs that span from the back toward the belly of the cow) cut across the bones. Available at most butcher shops, flanken ribs are four to eight inches long and about one and a half inches wide, with four or five oval-shaped cross-sections of bone along the edge. Historically, it was a cut of meat that many people could afford, and because it's tough and well-marbled with lots of connective tissue, flanken lends itself well to slow-cooked stews. Be it *t'fina pkalia* or Eastern European *cholent* (made from beans, barley, meat, and potatoes), flanken is the ideal cut: Over time, the ribs release their ample fat, collagen, and bone marrow into the stew, imparting profound richness and depth of flavor.

Other styles of beef short rib include the more common English cut, which is sliced parallel to the rib, and beef spare ribs, which are thinner and more tender than the English cut and don't contain the full bone. According to Paul Whitman, owner of Fischer Brothers & Leslie, a kosher butcher shop in Manhattan, each cut has its purpose and its season. "In the summer, when people are barbecuing, they buy more spare ribs," he said. "But in the winter, when they're making stews, they want flanken." —Gabriella Gerhenson



*Flanken*



*English cut short rib*

**Give It a Rest** In his article on page 47, Hunter Lewis aptly describes the way the aroma of roasting meat lures us to the table. But whatever primal instinct compels us to dig right in, giving meat time to rest can make a big difference in both flavor and texture. During cooking, juices begin to flow: At about 100 degrees Fahrenheit, muscle fibers start to release moisture; at 110 to 115 degrees, fats begin to melt; at 120, protein filaments break down and cluster, squeezing out water molecules. As the temperature continues to rise, these fluids continue to be released; if you were to carve the meat immediately upon removing it from the oven, the flavorful juices would run right out. If you let the meat rest, however, heat trapped inside will cause its overall temperature to rise for approximately five more minutes in smaller cuts or 15 minutes in larger ones. Once the internal temperature peaks and starts to lower, the meat structure becomes firmer again and better retains its juices, and the entire cut will be moist and full of flavor. When the temperature gets back to about 120, that's the ideal time to carve. —Greg Ferro





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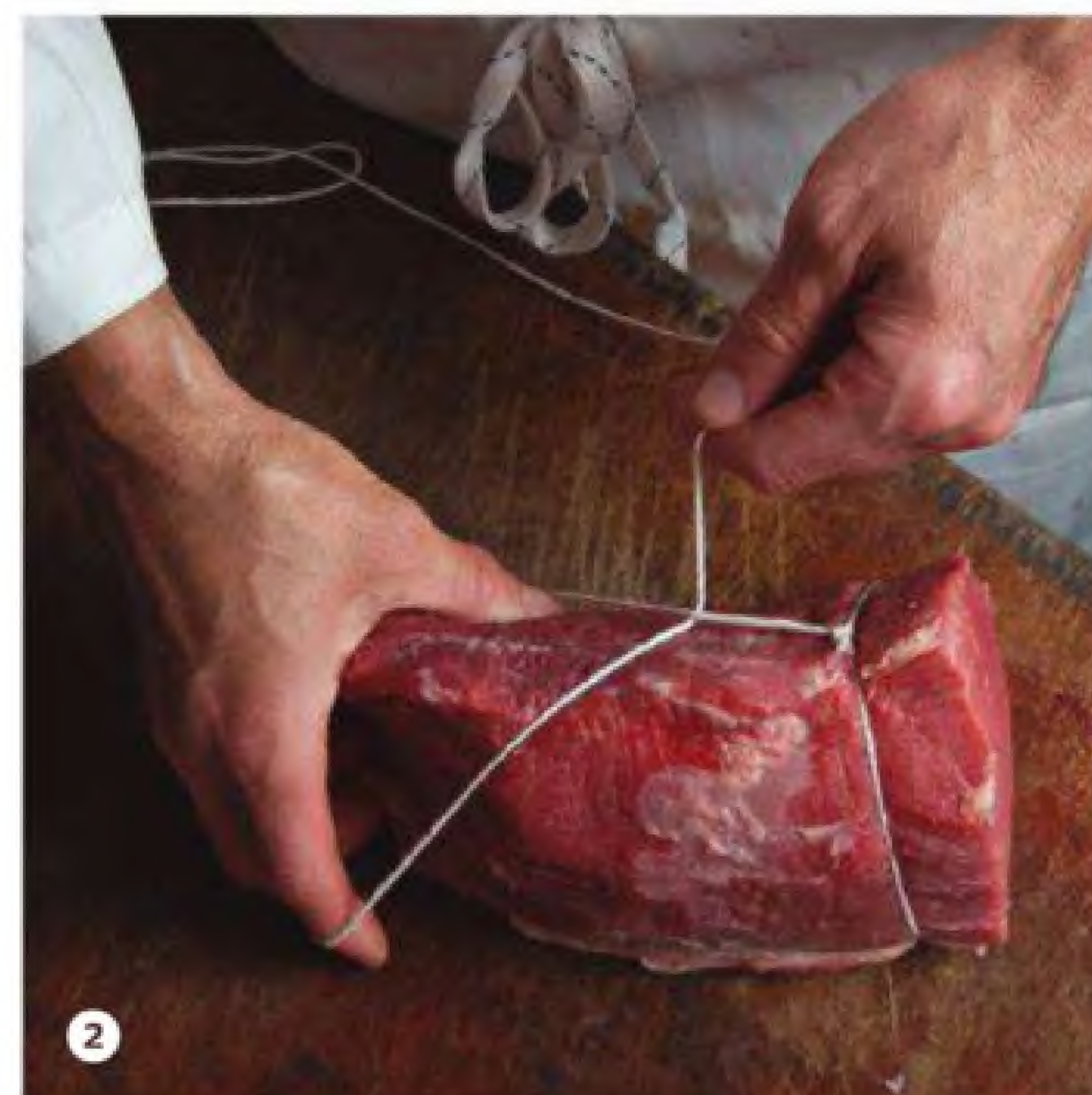
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## All Tied Up

The recipe for rosemary-rubbed beef tenderloin on page 50 calls for a two-pound tenderloin. No matter what part of the whole tenderloin your cut comes from, it's a good idea to tie the meat with kitchen twine before cooking. A tenderloin's thickness varies quite a bit from end to end, particularly if the cut includes the narrow tail. Cinching the meat at one- or two-inch intervals will give it a uniform shape and thus ensure even cooking. Robert Esposito, a third-generation butcher at the New York City shop Giovanni Esposito & Sons, demonstrated his method of tying, which he does after removing the tough muscle known as the chain, any excess fat, and the layer of connective tissue called silver skin. Here's how to do it yourself:

**1** Place the meat horizontally in front of you on a clean work surface. Cut a one- to two-yard length of butcher's string. Beginning at the leftmost tip of the tenderloin, pass one end of the string underneath the meat one to two inches from the tip, cross the ends of the string on top of the meat, and tie a knot. Trim the shorter length of excess string close to the knot. Hold the remaining, longer string above the meat with your left hand, and loop it around your right hand. **2** Using your right hand, slide the loop under the meat, pulling the string tight with your left hand until the loop is snugly in place one to two inches below the first loop. **3** Make a knot to secure the new loop. **4** Repeat every one to two inches, making evenly spaced and knotted loops, until you reach the rightmost tip of the tenderloin. When you've made your final loop, one to two inches from the tip, pull the string tight, tie it into a knot, and trim the excess string. —Kellie Evans

TODD COLEMAN (4)

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# Chefs Show Off their Skills Behind the Grill

## 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL SAVEUR SUMMER BBQ

As the sights and smells of Fall settle in, memories of the 2nd Annual SAVEUR Summer BBQ are still sizzling. This past June, SAVEUR brought together 12 of New York City's hottest chefs and 5 partner chefs from around the globe to celebrate the June/July "BBQ Nation" issue. Chefs and sponsors served up tasting portions of smoky, delicious BBQ fare and all the accompaniments to a group of hungry foodies, press and friends of SAVEUR at Pier 66 in NYC. If you didn't catch the action LIVE on NBC's LX NY, check-out this behind-the-scenes video on our website:

[www.SAVEUR.com/BBQVideo](http://www.SAVEUR.com/BBQVideo)

### Participating Chefs:

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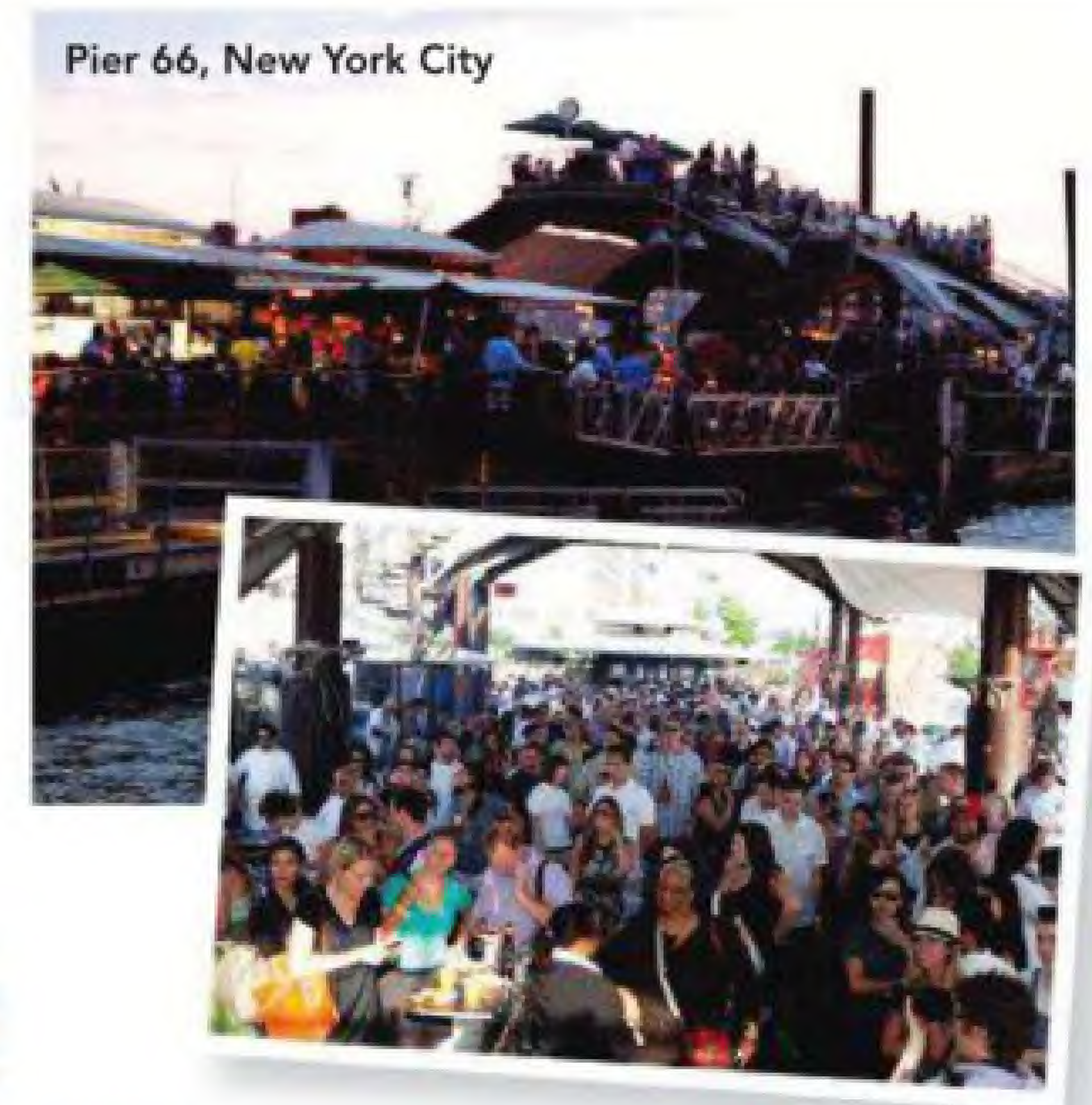
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Chef to John DeLucie:**  
The Lion

**Geoffrey Zakarian:**  
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## THE ULTIMATE SUMMER COCKTAIL EVENT

WHEN: July 20-24, 2011 | WHERE: New Orleans, LA

SAVEUR and our partners raised a glass at this year's Tales of the Cocktail® event. Over five days, we enjoyed spirit tastings, educational seminars, cocktail-pairing dinners, spirited lunches, special events, and revelry with the world's best mixologists.

Visit [facebook.com/totc](http://facebook.com/totc) to view photos of some of our favorite events:

### Brugal Rum Pool Party

Hotel Monteleone's rooftop pool was transformed into a world of Caribbean luxury.

### Cointreau® & SAVEUR Bar Star Mix-Off

Luigi Tarantino of Tosca Café in the Bronx, NY was crowned the 2011 Bar Star after an exciting live cocktail battle!

### GREY GOOSE® Inspire VIP Party

GREY GOOSE kicked off the week with an opening-night party that featured creative high-style cocktails.

### Kahlúa Coffee Bar

Tales-goers started each day "Delicioso-ly" with made-to-order coffee drinks spiked with Kahlúa.

### Pisco Portón Media Breakfast

Spirit writers, photographers, and bloggers enjoyed pisco smoothies, coffee drinks, and a creative morning menu.

### Sandeman Tasting Room and Mix-Off

Andy Minchow of Holeman & Finch Public House in Atlanta, GA earned the top prize for his porto cocktail Don's Dram.

### Tales of Tales Cocktail Confessional, Presented by Tanqueray

Cocktails and spirited stories abounded at the Cocktail Confessional booth, where Tales newbies and veterans shared their most memorable experiences from events passed.

### Spirited Dinner at American Sector with Tito's Handmade Vodka

An all-American feast featuring pork po'boys, pickled shrimp, and original cocktails from mixologist Rocky Yeh.





# THE PANTRY

## A Guide to Resources

*In producing the stories for this issue, we discovered ingredients and information too good to keep to ourselves. Please feel free to raid our pantry!*

BY BEN MIMS

### Fare

When traveling in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, dine at **Mitzi's Chicken Finger Restaurant** (250 Saint Mary Avenue; 204/943-9770) for their crunchy chicken tenders with honey-dill dipping sauce (see the recipe on page 16). If you're traveling through Gainesville, Florida on November 26, stop by the parking lot of the University of Florida's Ben Hill Griffin Stadium before the game with Florida State to eat exciting **tailgating fare**, such as bratwurst, fried alligator, king crab boils, smoked pork shoulder, deep-fried turkeys, buffalo chicken wings, red velvet brownies, Key lime pie and pecan pie. To find a retailer for the **Kerria Lacrima Di Morro D'Alba 2009** (\$14) featured in One Good Bottle, go to wine-searcher.com. To try locally sourced, invasive species seafood dishes, order Asian shore crab, moon snails, and Japanese knotweed at **Miya's Sushi** (68 Howe Street, New Haven, Connecticut; 203/777-9760); Asian carp and cow nose rays at **Heaven City** (S91 W27850 National Avenue, Mukwonago, Wisconsin; 262/363-5191); and lionfish at **Fish House Encore Restaurant** (102341 Overseas Highway, Key Largo, Florida; 305/451-0650). To learn more about the history of **All-Clad**, view their assortment of pots, pans, cooking utensils, and other cooking equipment, and to find retailers who sell their products, go to all-clad.com.

### Reporter

To make the toad in the hole recipe (see page 32), purchase **pork sausages**, available from William's Pork (\$7.95 for a 1-pound package of 5 sausages; 910/608-2226; britishbacon.com).

### Drink

To make the Beet It cocktail recipe (see page 44), purchase **Esprit de June grapevine flower liqueur**, available from Borisal Liquor and Wine (\$27.99 for a 750-milliliter bottle; 800/658-8149; drinkupny.com).

### Ipoh

To make the shrimp dumplings recipe (see page 64), buy **gyoza wrappers**, available from Phil Am Food (\$1.99 for a 12-ounce package; 201/963-0455; philamfood.com). To prepare the coconut rice recipe (see page 64), buy **fresh kaffir lime leaves**, available from Ethnic Foods Company (\$4.99 for about 15 leaves; 866-331-7684; store.ethnicfoodsco.com). To make the stir-fried rice noodles (see page 64), buy **dried shrimp paste**, available from Shop The East (\$2.89 for a 10-ounce block; 714/531-9800; shoptheeast.com); **dried Chinese link sausages**, available from Amazon.com (\$14.75 for three 12-ounce packages; amazon.com); **fresh, wide Chinese rice noodles**, available from your local Asian or ethnic grocery store; and **double black soy sauce**, available from Amazon.com (\$6.75 for a 20.3-ounce bottle; amazon.com). To prepare the fresh spring rolls recipe (see page 64), buy **dried spiced bean curd**, available in the refrigerated section of Asian grocery stores; **small dried shrimp**, available from Import Food (\$4.89 for a 3-ounce bag; 888/618-8424; importfood.com); **NYJ-brand spring roll pastry wrappers**, available from Phil Am Food (\$1.39 for a 12-ounce package; see above); and **Huy Fong sriracha chili sauce**, available from Asian

Food Grocer (\$2.99 for a 17-ounce bottle; 888/482-2742; asianfoodgrocer.com). To make the spiced chicken rendang recipe (see page 66), purchase **frozen turmeric** and **fresh kaffir lime leaves**, available from your local Asian or ethnic grocery stores. To prepare the chile fried fish (see page 66), purchase **tamarind paste**, available from Grocery Thai (\$4.40 for a 16-ounce package; 818/469-9407; grocerythai.com); **dried red shrimp**, available from Amazon.com (\$6.26 for a 2.5-ounce container; amazon.com); **dried shrimp paste**, available from Shop The East (\$2.89 for a 10-ounce block; 714/531-9800; shoptheeast.com); and **Huy Fong sriracha chili sauce**, available from Asian Food Grocer (\$2.99 for a 17-ounce bottle; asianfoodgrocer.com).

### Fermentation

To learn more about fermentation expert **Sandor Katz**, to find tips, and get recipes, go to wildfermentation.com. Purchase Katz's seminal fermentation book called *Wild Fermentation: The Flavor, Nutrition, and Craft of Live-Culture Foods* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2003), available from Amazon.com (\$15.05; amazon.com). Also, go to the USDA's website, usda.gov, and type in "fermentation," to find resources and documents containing valuable information on the science behind fermentation, pickling foods and food safety precautions to take when fermenting at home. To prepare the sour pickles recipe (see page 72) using the optional **fresh grape leaves**, find them at your local farmers' market or vineyard. To make the Indian lime pickles recipe (see page 72), purchase **key limes**, available from Melissa's/World Variety Produce (\$15.80 for a 4-pound bag; 800/588-0151; melissas.com); **asafetida**, available from Kalustyan's (\$4.99 for a 50-gram can; 800/352-

3451; kalustyans.com); and **fresh curry leaves**, available from Indian Foods Company (\$4.99 for about 10 stems; 866/331-7684; store.indianfoodsco.com). To make the fermented beets with ginger and coriander (see page 72), buy **whew** from your local cheesemonger or from a grocery store selling fresh cheeses; or drain fresh yogurt in a cheesecloth-lined strainer over a bowl at least 6 hours or overnight to drain off enough whey to use in the recipe. To prepare the Concord grape soda recipe (see page 76), use **champagne yeast**, available from Fermentation Trap (\$0.50 for a 5-gram package; 888/985-2192; fermentationtrap.com). For a source of small vegetables to use in the mixed vegetable pickles recipe (see page 76), contact **The Chef's Garden** (419/433-4947; chefs-garden.com).

### Sukkot

To make the za'atar dip recipe (see page 89), purchase **za'atar**, available from My Spice Sage (\$14.25 for a 16-ounce bag; 877/890-5244; myspicesage.com).

### Soft Food

To make the Indian-style carrots with mustard seeds (see page 94), use **yellow split peas**, available from Nuts Online (\$2.99 for a 1-pound bag; 800/558-6887; nutsonline.com) and **fresh curry leaves**, available from Indian Foods Company (\$4.99 for about 10 stems; see above).

### Correction

In our June/July 2011 issue, the sauce in the photo on page 56 is from Scotts Parkers BBQ, not Scott's. In our August/September 2011 issue, the photograph of a green chile cheeseburger on page 31 was incorrectly identified as being from Bobcat Bites in Santa Fe, New Mexico. It is in fact from the Buckhorn Tavern in San Antonio, New Mexico.



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# SAVEUR MENU

SAVEUR's guide to EVENTS, PROMOTIONS & PRODUCTS



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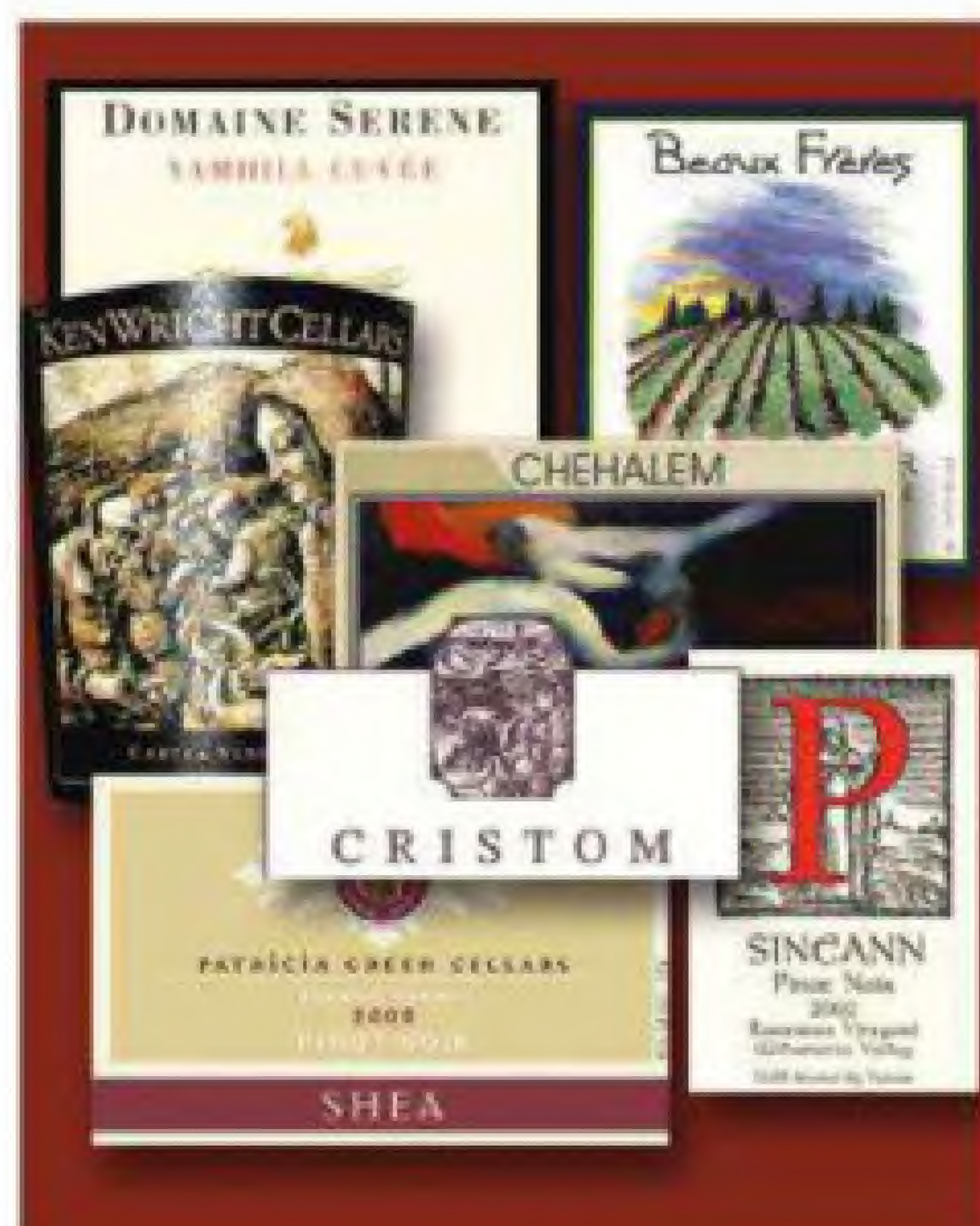




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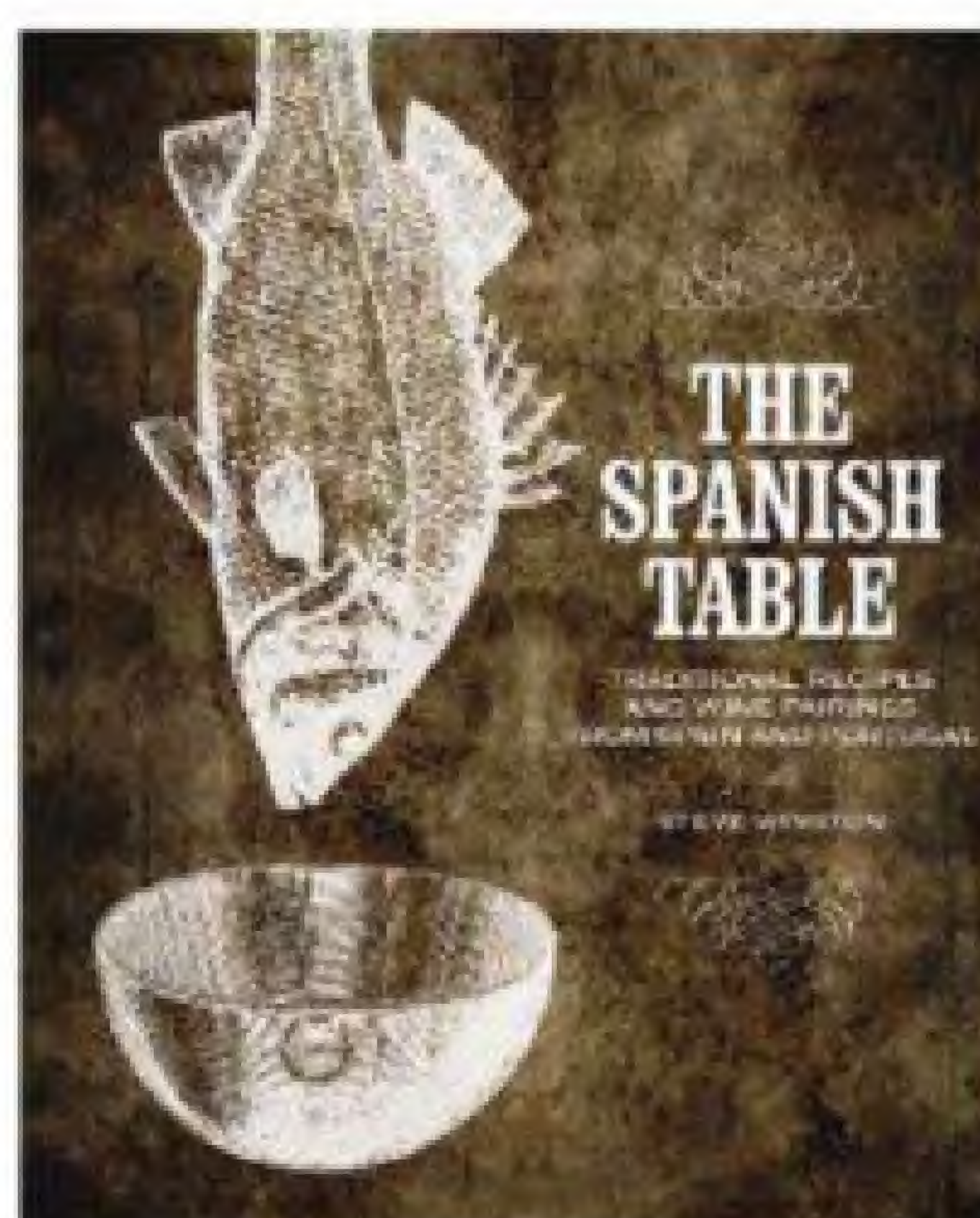


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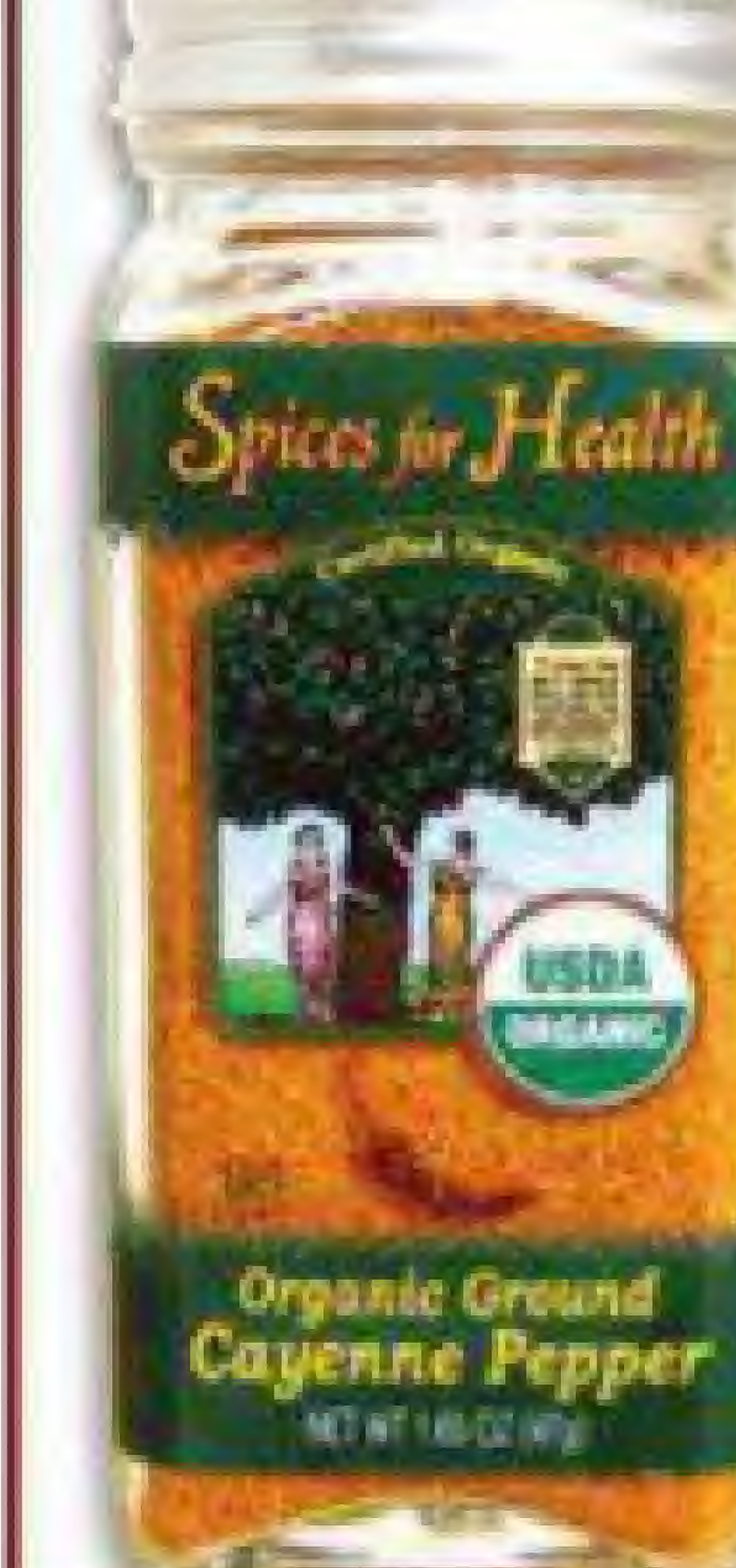
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# M O M E N T

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**TIME** October 31, 1955

**PLACE** Seattle, Washington

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*As one trick-or-treater discovered, the cake at this Halloween party was devilishly good.*

---

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